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A CHILD'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND

CHARLES DICKENS 1812-1870

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A child's history of England

Charles Dickens 1812-1870

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BY

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A CHILD'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

STONEHENGE.

CHAPTER I.

ANCIENT ENGLAND AND THE ROMANS.

You will see on the map of the world, in the left-hand upper corner of the Eastern Hemisphere, two islands lying in the sea. They are England and Scotland, and Ireland. England and Scotland form the greater part of these islands. Ireland is next in size. The little islands look-

ing like dots are chiefly bits of Scotland, broken off, in the course of time, by the power of the restless water.

In the old days, long ago, the sea roared round them just as it roars now. But the sea was not alive then with great ships sailing to and from all parts of the world. The winds and waves brought no adventurers to the islands, and the savage islanders knew nothing of the rest of the world, and the rest of the world knew nothing of them.

It is supposed that the Phœnicians came in ships to these islands, and found that they produced tin and lead —both very useful things, produced upon the sea-coast. The most celebrated tin-mines in Cornwall are still close to the sea. One of them is hollowed out underneath the ocean, and the miners say that in stormy weather they can hear the noise of the waves thundering above their heads.

The Phœnicians traded with the islanders for these metals, and gave other things in exchange. The islanders were poor savages, going almost naked, or dressed in the rough skins of beasts. But the Phœnicians, sailing over to the opposite coasts of France and Belgium, and saying to the people there, "We have been to those white cliffs across the water, which you can see in fine weather, and from that country, which is called Britain, we bring this tin and lead," tempted some of the French and Belgians to come over also. These people settled themselves on the south coast of England, which is now called Kent, and, although they were a rough people, too, they taught the savage Britons some useful arts, and improved that part of the islands. It is probable that other people came over from Spain to Ireland and settled there. Thus strangers became mixed with the islanders, and the savage Britons grew into a wild, bold people—almost savage still, but hardy, brave and strong.

The whole country was covered with forests and swamps. The greater part of it was misty and cold. There were no roads, bridges, streets nor houses. A town was only a

collection of straw-covered huts, hidden in a thick wood, with a ditch all round and a low wall made of mud, or the trunks of trees placed one upon another. The people planted little or no corn, but lived upon the flesh of their flocks and cattle. They made no coins, but used metal rings for money. They were clever in basket-work, and they could make a coarse kind of cloth and some very bad earthenware. But in building fortresses they were clever.

They made boats of basket-work, covered with the skins of animals, but seldom ventured far from the shore. They made swords of copper mixed with tin, but they were so soft that a heavy blow would bend one. They made light shields, short, pointed daggers, and spears which they jerked back, after they had thrown them at an enemy, by a long strip of leather fastened to the stem. The butt-end was a rattle, to frighten an enemy's horse. The ancient Britons, being divided into as many as thirty or forty tribes, each commanded by its own little king, were constantly fighting with one another, and they always fought with these weapons.

They were very fond of horses. The standard of Kent was the picture of a white horse. They could break and manage them well. Indeed, the horses, though they were rather small, were so well taught in those days that they can scarcely be said to have improved since, though the men are so much wiser. They obeyed every command, and would stand still, in all the din and noise of battle, while their masters went to fight on foot. The Britons could not have succeeded in their most remarkable art without the aid of these sensible animals. The art I mean is the construction and management of war-chariots, for which they have ever been celebrated in history. Each of the best sort of these chariots, not quite breast-high in front and open at the back, contained one man to drive and two or three others to fight—all standing up. The horses who drew them were so well trained that they

would tear at full gallop over the stony ways and through the woods, dashing their enemies beneath their hoofs, and cutting them to pieces with the blades of swords or scythes fastened to the wheels, and stretched out beyond the car on each side for that cruel purpose. In a moment, while at full speed, the horses would stop at the driver's command. The men would leap out, deal blows about them with their swords, leap on the horses, on the pole, spring back into the chariots anyhow, and as soon as they were safe the horses tore away again.

The Britons had a strange religion, called the religion of the Druids. It seems to have been brought over, in early times, from the opposite country of France, and to have mixed up the worship of the Serpent and of the Sun and Moon with the worship of some of the heathen gods and goddesses. Its ceremonies were kept secret by the priests (the Druids), who pretended to be enchanters. Their ceremonies included the sacrifice of human victims, the torture of suspected criminals, and on occasions the burning alive, in immense wicker-cages, of a number of men and animals together. The Druid priests had great veneration for the oak. They met in dark woods, called sacred groves, and there they instructed in their mysterious arts young men who came to them as pupils.

These Druids built great altars open to the sky, fragments of some of which yet remain. Stonehenge is the most extraordinary of these. Three curious stones in Kent form another. We know, from examination of the great blocks, that they could not have been raised without the aid of some ingenious machines which are common now, but which the ancient Britons certainly did not use. I should not wonder if the Druids kept the people out of sight while they made these buildings, and then pretended that they built them by magic.

Such was the condition of the Britons fifty-five years before the birth of our Saviour, when the Romans under

Julius Cæsar, were masters of all the rest of the world. Cæsar had just conquered Gaul, and hearing there a good deal about the opposite island with the white cliffs, and about the bravery of the Britons who inhabited it, he resolved to conquer Britain next.

THE INVASION OF BRITAIN BY JULIUS CÆSAR.

So Cæsar came sailing over with 80 vessels and 12,000 men. And he came from the French coast between Calais and Boulogne, "because thence was the shortest passage into Britain"—for the same reason that steamboats now take the same track every day. He expected to conquer Britain easily. But it was not easy work, for the Britons fought bravely. However, for once that the Britons beat him he beat them twice; still he was glad to accept their proposals of peace and go away.

But early in the next year he came back—this time with 800 vessels and 30,000 men. The British tribes chose as their general-in-chief a Briton whom the Romans called Cassivellaunus, but whose British name was Caswallon. A brave general he was, and well he and his soldiers fought the Roman army—so well, that whenever the Roman soldiers heard the rattle of the rapid British chariots they trembled in their hearts. Several battles were fought. Brave Cassivellaunus had the worst of it, though he and his men always fought like lions. The British chiefs were always quarrelling with him and with one another, so he gave up and proposed peace. Cæsar was glad to grant peace and go away with his remaining ships and men.

Nearly a hundred years passed on, and all that time there was peace in Britain. The Britons improved their towns and mode of life, became more civilized, travelled, and learned a great deal from the Gauls and Romans. At last the Roman Emperor Claudius sent a mighty force to subdue the island, and shortly afterwards arrived himself. They did little, and another general came. Some of the British chiefs submitted; others resolved to fight to the death. Of these, the bravest was Caractacus, who, with his army, gave battle to the Romans among the mountains of North Wales. "This day," said he to his soldiers, "decides the fate of Britain! Your liberty or your eternal slavery dates from this hour. Remember your brave ancestors, who drove the great Cæsar himself across the sea." Hearing these words, his men rushed upon the Romans. But the strong Roman swords and armor were too much for the weaker British weapons in close conflict. The Britons lost the day. The wife and daughter of the brave Caractacus were taken prisoners; his brothers delivered themselves up; he himself was betrayed into the hands of the Romans, and they carried him and all his family in triumph to Rome.

But a great man will be great in misfortune, great in

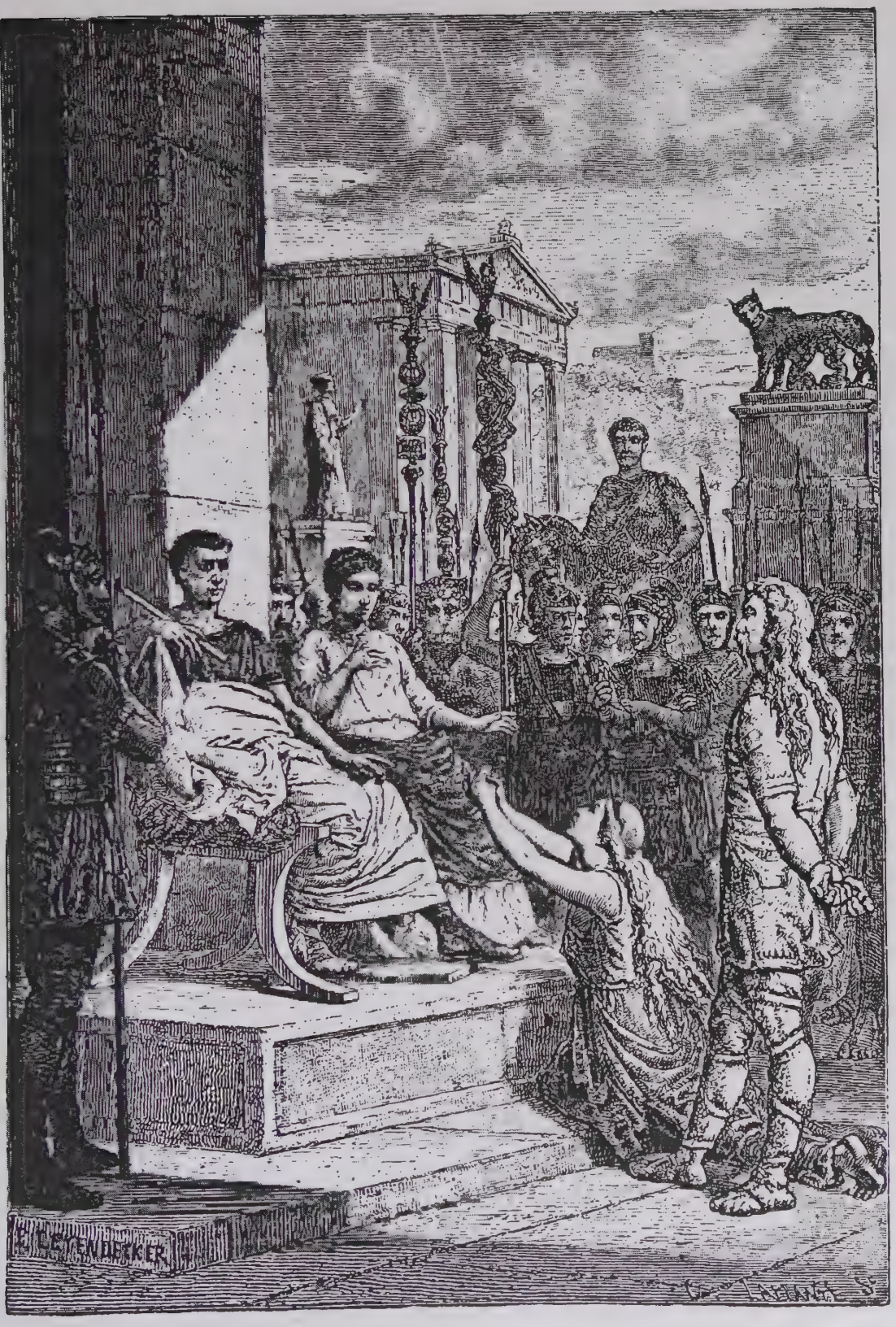
prison, great in chains. His noble air so touched the Roman people, who thronged to see him, that he and his family were restored to freedom. No one knows whether he died in Rome or returned to his own country.

ATTACK ON THE ISLAND OF MONA.

Still the Britons *would not* yield. They rose again and again, and died by thousands, sword in hand. They rose on every possible occasion. Suetonius, another Roman general, came and stormed the Island of Anglesey (then

called Mona), which was supposed to be sacred, and he burned the Druids in their own wicker-cages, by their own fires. But even while he was in Britain with his victorious troops, the Britons rose. Because Boadicea, a British queen, the widow of the King of the Norfolk and Suffolk people, resisted the plundering of the Romans who were settled in England, she was scourged by order of Catus, a Roman officer, her two daughters were insulted, and her husband's relations were made slaves. To avenge this injury, the Britons rose with all their might. They drove Catus into Gaul; they laid the Roman possessions waste; they forced the Romans out of London; they hanged, burned, crucified, and slew by the sword 70,000 Romans in a few days. Suetonius strengthened his army and gave them battle. They strengthened their army and desperately attacked his on the field where it was strongly posted. Boadicea, in a war-chariot, with her fair hair streaming in the wind, drove among the troops and cried to them for vengeance on their oppressors, the licentious Romans. The Britons fought to the last, but they were vanquished with great slaughter, and the unhappy queen took poison.

Still, the spirit of the Britons was not broken. When Suetonius left the country they fell upon his troops and re-took the Island of Anglesey. Agricola came twenty years afterwards and re-took it once more, and devoted seven years to subduing the country, especially that part which is now called Scotland; but its people, the Caledonians, resisted him at every inch of ground. They fought the bloodiest battles with him; they killed their wives and children to prevent his making prisoners of them, then fell, fighting, in such great numbers that certain hills in Scotland are yet supposed to be vast heaps of stones piled up above their graves. Hadrian came thirty years afterwards, and they resisted him. Severus came nearly a hundred years afterwards, and they worried his great army



CARACTACUS AND HIS WIFE AT ROME. (15)

like dogs, and rejoiced to see them die by thousands in the bogs and swamps. Caracalla, the son of Severus, did the most to conquer them, but not by force of arms. He yielded up land to the Caledonians, and gave the Britons the same privileges as the Romans possessed. There was peace after this for seventy years.

Then new enemies arose. They were the Saxons, a fierce people from the countries to the north of the Rhine, the great river of Germany. They came in pirate ships to plunder the sea-coast of Gaul and Britain. They were repulsed, but after a time they renewed their ravages. A few years more, and the Scots (which was then the name for the people of Ireland) and the Picts, a northern people, began plundering incursions into the south of Britain. All these attacks were repeated at intervals during two hundred years, and through a long succession of Roman emperors and chiefs, during which time the Britons rose against the Romans over and over again. At last, in the days of the Roman Honorius, when Roman power all over the world was fast declining and when Rome wanted all her soldiers at home, they abandoned all hope of conquering Britain and went away. And still, at last as at first, the Britons rose against them in their old, brave manner; for, a little while before, they had turned away the Roman magistrates and declared themselves an independent people.

Five hundred years had passed since Cæsar's invasion of the Island, when the Romans departed from it forever. In that time, though they caused terrible bloodshed, they did much to improve the condition of the Britons. They made great military roads, built forts, taught them how to dress and arm themselves, and refined the whole British way of living. Agricola built a great wall of earth, more than seventy miles long, to keep out the Picts and Scots; Hadrian strengthened it; Severus built it afresh of stone. Above all, it was in the Roman time and by means of

Roman ships that the Christian religion was first brought into Britain, and its people first taught the great lesson that to be good in the sight of God they must love their neighbors as themselves and do unto others as they would be done by. The Druids declared it wicked to believe this, and cursed the people who did believe it. But when the people found that they were none the better for the blessings of the Druids, and none the worse for their curses, but that the sun shone and the rain fell without consulting the Druids at all, they began to think that the Druids were mere men, and that it signified very little whether they cursed or blessed. After which, the pupils of the Druids fell off greatly in numbers, and the Druids took to other trades.

Thus we come to the end of the Roman time in England. But little is known of those five hundred years, but some remains of them are still found. Often, when laborers are digging up the ground to make foundations for houses or churches, they light on rusty money that once belonged to the Romans. Fragments of plates from which they ate, of goblets from which they drank, and of pavement on which they trod, are discovered among the earth that is broken by the plough. Wells that the Romans sunk still yield water; roads that they made form part of the highways. Traces of Roman camps overgrown with grass, and of mounds that are the burial-places of heaps of Britons, are to be seen in almost all parts of the country. Across the bleak moors of Northumberland the wall of Severus, overrun with moss and weeds, still stretches, a strong ruin, and the shepherds and their dogs lie sleeping on it in the summer weather. Stonehenge yet stands —a monument of the earlier time when the Roman name was unknown in Britain, and when the Druids, with their magic wands, could not have written it in the sands of the wild sea-shore.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLAND UNDER THE EARLY SAXONS.

The Romans had scarcely gone when the Britons wished they had never left. The Romans being gone, and the Britons being reduced in numbers by their long wars, the Picts and Scots came pouring in swarms over the unguarded wall of Severus. They plundered the rich towns and killed the people, and came back so often for more booty that the Britons lived a life of terror. As if the Picts and Scots were not bad enough on land, the Saxons attacked the islanders by sea; and, as if something more were wanting, they quarrelled bitterly among themselves as to what prayers they ought to say and how they ought to say them. The priests, being angry with one another on these questions, cursed one another in the heartiest manner, and cursed all the people whom they could not persuade. So the Britons were badly off.

They were in such distress that they sent a message to Rome, entreating help, in which they said, "The barbarians chase us into the sea, the sea throws us back upon the barbarians, and we have only the hard choice left us of perishing by the sword or perishing by the waves." But the Romans could not help them; they had enough to do to defend themselves against their own enemies, who were very fierce and strong. At last the Britons resolved to make peace with the Saxons, and invited them into their country to help keep out the Picts and Scots.

It was a British prince, Vortigern, who took this resolution, and made a treaty of friendship with Hengist and Horsa, two Saxon chiefs. They drove out the Picts and

Scots; and Vortigern, being grateful to them, made no opposition to their settling in that part of England which is called the Isle of Thanet, or to their inviting over more of their countrymen to join them. Hengist had a beautiful daughter named Rowena; and when, at a feast, she filled a golden goblet to the brim with wine and gave it to Vortigern, saying, in a sweet voice, "Dear king, thy health!" the king fell in love with her.

THE CUP OF WELCOME TO VORTIGERN.

They married, and whenever the king was angry with the Saxons Rowena would put her arms round his neck and softly say, "Dear king, they are my people! Be favorable to them, as you loved that Saxon girl who gave you the golden goblet of wine at the feast."

In time Vortigern died and Rowena died, and generations of Saxons and Britons died, and events that happened

during a long time would have been forgotten but for the songs of the old bards, who used to go from feast to feast, recounting the deeds of their forefathers. Among the histories of which they sang and talked there was a famous one concerning the bravery and virtues of King Arthur, supposed to have been a British prince in those old times. Whether such a person really lived, or whether there were several persons whose histories came to be confused together under that one name, or whether all about him was invention, no one knows.

In and long after the days of Vortigern, fresh bodies of Saxons came pouring into Britain. One body, conquering the Britons in the East and settling there, called their kingdom Essex; another body settled in the West and called their kingdom Wessex; the Northfolk, or Norfolk people, established themselves in one place; the Southfolk, or Suffolk people, established themselves in another, and gradually seven kingdoms or states arose in England, which were called the Saxon Heptarchy. The poor Britons, falling back before these crowds of fighting men whom they had innocently invited over as friends, retired into Wales, into Devonshire and into Cornwall.

Kent is the most famous of the seven Saxon kingdoms. The Christian religion was preached to the Saxons there by Augustine, a monk from Rome. King Ethelbert of Kent was converted. The moment he said he was a Christian, his courtiers all said *they* were Christians; after which 10,000 of his subjects said they were Christians, too. Augustine built a little church close to this king's palace, on the ground now occupied by the cathedral of Canterbury. The king's nephew built on a muddy, marshy place near London, where there had been a temple to Apollo, a church dedicated to Saint Peter, which is now Westminster Abbey, and in London itself, on the foundation of a temple to Diana, he built another little church, which has risen up since that old time to be Saint Paul's.

After the death of Ethelbert, Edwin, King of Northumbria, allowed his child to be baptized, and held a council to consider whether he and his people should all be Christians or not. It was decided that they should be. From that time Christianity spread itself and became their faith.

The next prince was Egbert. He lived about 150 years afterwards, and claimed to have a better right to the throne of Wessex than Beortric, another Saxon prince who was at the head of that kingdom, and who married Edburga, the daughter of Offa, king of another of the seven kingdoms. This Queen Edburga was a murderess. One day she mixed a cup of poison for a noble belonging to the court, but her husband drank of it by mistake and died. Upon this the people revolted, and. running to the palace, cried, "Down with the wicked queen who poisons men!" They drove her out of the country, and abolished the title she had disgraced.

Egbert, not considering himself safe in England, having claimed the crown of Wessex (for he thought his rival might take him prisoner and put him to death), sought refuge at the court of Charlemagne, King of France. On the death of Beortric he came back to Britain, succeeded to the throne of Wessex, conquered some of the other monarchs of the seven kingdoms, added their territories to his own, and, for the first time, called the country over which he ruled, England.

And now new enemies arose, who, for a long time, troubled England sorely. These were the Northmen—the people of Denmark and Norway, whom the English called the Danes. They were a warlike people, quite at home upon the sea; not Christians; very daring and cruel. They came over in ships, and plundered and burned wheresoever they landed. Once they beat Egbert in battle; once Egbert beat them. But they cared nothing for being beaten. In the four following short reigns of Ethelwulf

and his sons Ethelbald, Ethelbert and Ethelred, they came back over and over again, burning and plundering, and laying England waste. They seized Edmund, King of East England, and bound him to a tree. They proposed that he should change his religion, but he steadily refused. Upon that they beat him, shot arrows at him, and finally struck off his head. It is impossible to say whose head they might have struck off next but for the death of King Ethelred, and the succession to his throne of the best and wisest king that ever lived in England.

CHAPTER III.

THE GOOD SAXON, ALFRED.

ALFRED THE GREAT was a young man, twenty-three years old, when he became king. Twice in his childhood he had been taken to Rome, where the Saxon nobles were in the habit of going on religious journeys, and once he went to Paris. Learning was so little cared for then that at twelve years old he had not been taught to read, although of the sons of King Ethelwulf he was the favorite. But he had—as most men who grow up to be great and good are generally found to have had—an excellent mother, and one day this lady read a book of Saxon poetry. The art of printing was not known until long after that period, and the book, which was written, was what is called "illuminated" with bright letters, richly painted. The brothers admiring it very much, their mother said, "I will give it to that one of you who first learns to read." Alfred sought out a tutor, applied himself to learn, and won the book.

This great king, in the first year of his reign, fought nine

battles with the Danes. He made some treaties with them, too, by which the false Danes swore they would quit the country. But they thought nothing of breaking oaths, and treaties, too, when it suited their purpose, and coming back again to fight, plunder and burn as usual. One fatal winter, in the fourth year of Alfred's reign, they spread themselves over all England, and so routed the king's soldiers that the king was left alone, and was obliged to disguise himself as a peasant and take refuge in the cottage of one of his cowherds, who did not know his face.

Here Alfred, while the Danes sought him far and near, was left alone one day by the cowherd's wife to watch some cakes which she put to bake upon the hearth. Thinking of his unhappy subjects, whom the Danes chased through the land, he forgot the cakes, and they were burned. "What!" said the wife, who little thought she was scolding the king. "You will be ready enough to eat them by and by, and yet you cannot watch them, idle dog!"

At length the Devonshire men made head against a new host of Danes who landed on their coast, killed their chief and captured their flag (on which was the likeness of a raven). The loss of their standard troubled them greatly, for they believed it to be enchanted. They had a story that when they were victorious in battle the raven stretched his wings and seemed to fly, and when defeated he would droop. He had reason to droop now, for Alfred joined the Devonshire men, and prepared for vengeance on the Danes and the deliverance of his oppressed people.

It was important to know how numerous those pestilent Danes were, and how they were fortified. Alfred, being a good musician, disguised himself as a glee-man, or minstrel, and went with his harp to the Danish camp. He played and sang in the very tent of Guthrum, the Danish leader, and entertained the Danes as they caroused. While he seemed to think of nothing but his music he was watchful of their tents, their arms, their discipline—everything

that he desired to know. And soon did this great king entertain them to a different tune; for, summoning all his followers to meet him, he put himself at their head, defeated the Danes with great slaughter, and besieged them to prevent their escape. But, being as merciful as he was

ALFRED AND HIS MOTHER.

good and brave, he, instead of killing them, proposed peace, on condition that they should altogether depart from that western part of England and settle in the East, and that Guthrum should become a Christian. This Guthrum did. At his baptism Alfred was his godfather. Guthrum deserved that clemency, for ever afterwards he was loyal and faithful to the king. The Danes under him were faithful, too. They plundered and burned no more, but worked

like honest men. They ploughed and sowed and reaped, and led good, honest English lives.

All the Danes were not like these under Guthrum; for, after some years, more of them came over in the old plundering and burning way. For three years there was a war with these Danes; and there was a famine in the country, too, and a plague, both upon human creatures and beasts. But Alfred, whose heart never failed him, built large ships to pursue the pirates on the sea, encouraged his soldiers to fight valiantly against them on the shore, drove them all away, and then there was repose in England.

As great and good in peace as he was great and good in war, Alfred never rested from his labors to improve his people. He loved to talk with clever men, and to write down what they told him for his people to read. He studied Latin after learning to read English; he translated Latin books into the English-Saxon tongue, that his people might be improved by their contents. He made just laws, that they might live more happily; he turned away all partial judges, that no wrong might be done them—he was so careful of their property, and punished robbers so severely. He founded schools; he patiently heard causes himself in his court of justice. The great desires of his heart were to do right to all his subjects, and to leave England better, wiser, happier in all ways than he found it. His industry in these efforts was astonishing. Every day he divided into certain portions, and in each portion devoted himself to a certain pursuit.

All this time he was afflicted with an unknown disease, which caused him violent pain that nothing could relieve. He bore it like a brave man until he was fifty-three years old, and then, having reigned thirty years, he died, in the year 901. Long ago as that is, his fame and the love and gratitude with which his subjects regarded him are remembered to this hour.

In the reign of Edward, surnamed The Elder, who was

chosen in council to succeed, a nephew of King Alfred troubled the country in trying to obtain the throne. The Danes in the east of England took part with this usurper,

ALFRED AT HIS BOOKS.

and there was hard fighting; but the king, with the assistance of his sister, gained the day, and reigned in peace for twenty-four years. He gradually extended his power over the whole of England, and so the seven kingdoms were united into one.

When England thus became one kingdom, ruled over by one Saxon king, the Saxons had been settled in the country more than 450 years. Great changes had taken place in its customs during that time. The Saxons were still greedy eaters and great drinkers, but many new comforts had become known and were fast increasing. Hangings for the walls of rooms are known to have been made of silk, ornamented with birds and flowers in needlework. Tables and chairs were curiously carved in different woods; were sometimes decorated with gold or silver; sometimes even made of those precious metals. Knives and spoons were used at table; golden ornaments were worn, with silk and cloth, and golden embroideries; dishes were made of gold and silver, brass and bone. There were varieties of drinking-horns, bedsteads, musical instruments. A harp was passed round at a feast, like the drinking-bowl, from guest to guest, and each one usually sang or played when his turn came. The weapons of the Saxons were stoutly made, and among them was a terrible iron hammer that gave deadly blows, and was long remembered. The Saxons themselves were a handsome people. The men were proud of their long, fair hair, parted on the forehead; their ample beards, their fresh complexions and clear eyes. The beauty of the Saxon women filled all England with a new delight and grace.

CHAPTER IV.

ATHELSTAN AND THE SIX BOY-KINGS.

ATHELSTAN, the son of Edward, succeeded that king. He reigned fifteen years, and governed England well. He reduced the people of Wales, and obliged them to pay

tribute in money and in cattle. He was victorious over the Cornishmen, who were not yet quite under the Saxon government. He restored such of the old laws as were good and had fallen into disuse, made some wise new laws, and took care of the poor and weak. He broke a strong alliance made against him by the Danes, Scots, and the people of North Wales, defeating them in one great battle, long famous for the vast numbers slain in it. After that he had a quiet reign, and foreign princes visited the English court.

When Athelstan died, his brother Edmund, who was only eighteen, became king. He was the first of six boy-kings. They called him The Magnificent, because he showed a taste for refinement. But he was beset by the Danes, and had a short and troubled reign.

Then succeeded the boy-king Edred, who was weak and sickly in body, but of a strong mind. His armies fought the Northmen (the Danes and Norwegians, or the sea-kings, as they were called), and beat them for the time. And in nine years Edred died and passed away.

Then came the boy-king Edwy, fifteen years of age; but the real king, who had the real power, was a monk named Dunstan—a clever priest, a little mad, and not a little proud and cruel.

Dunstan was then Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey. The priests of those days were generally the only scholars. They were learned in many things. Having to make their own convents and monasteries on uncultivated grounds that were granted to them by the crown, it was necessary that they should be good farmers and good gardeners, or their lands would have been too poor to support them. For the decoration of the chapels where they prayed, and for the comfort of the refectories where they ate and drank, it was necessary that there should be good carpenters, good smiths, good painters among them. For their greater safety in sickness and accident, living alone by themselves

in solitary places, it was necessary that they should study the virtues of plants and herbs, and should know how to dress cuts, burns, scalds and bruises, and how to set broken limbs. Accordingly, they taught themselves and one another a great variety of useful arts, and became skilful in agriculture, medicine, surgery and handicraft.

On the day of the coronation of the handsome boy-king Edwy, it was remarked that the king quietly left the coronation-feast while all the company were there. Dunstan, finding him in the company of his young wife Elgiva and her mother, dragged him back into the feasting-hall by force.

The young king was old enough to feel this insult. Dunstan had been treasurer in the last reign, and Edwy charged him with taking some of the last king's money. The abbot fled to Belgium. He conspired with the Archbishop of Canterbury to set up the king's young brother Edgar as his rival for the throne; and, not content with this revenge, he caused Queen Elgiva to be stolen, branded in the cheek with a red-hot iron, and sold into slavery in Ireland. But the Irish people befriended her, and they said, "Let us restore the girl-queen to the boy-king, and make the young lovers happy!" and they cured her wound, and sent her home as beautiful as before. But the villain, Dunstan, caused her to be waylaid as she was hurrying to join her husband, and to be hacked with swords and left to die. When Edwy the Fair heard of her dreadful fate he died of a broken heart.

Then came the boy-king Edgar, called The Peaceful, fifteen years old. Dunstan, being still the real king, made himself Archbishop of Canterbury for his greater glory, and exercised such power over the neighboring British princes, and so collected them about the king, that once, when the king went on the river Dee, the eight oars of his boat were pulled by eight crowned kings. As Edgar was obedient to Dunstan and the monks, they represented him

as the best of kings, but he was really profligate, debauched and vicious. He once forcibly carried off a young lady from the convent at Wilton; and Dunstan, pretending to be shocked, condemned him not to wear his crown for seven years. His marriage with his second wife, Elfrida, was one of the worst events of his reign. Hearing of this

DEATH OF EDWARD THE MARTYR.

lady's beauty, he sent his courtier, Athelwold, to her father's castle to see if she were as charming as fame reported. She was exceedingly beautiful, and Athelwold fell in love with and married her; but he told the king that she was rich, not handsome. The king, suspecting the truth, told Athelwold to prepare for his visit. Athelwold confessed to his young wife what he had said and

done, and implored her to disguise her beauty by some ugly dress or silly manner, that he might be safe from the king's anger. She promised she would; but she was a proud woman, who would rather be a queen than the wife of a courtier. She dressed in her best, and adorned herself with her richest jewels, and when the king came he discovered the cheat. So he caused Athelwold to be murdered and married his widow, this bad Elfrida. Six years afterwards he died and was buried in the abbey of Glastonbury, which he—or Dunstan for him—had much enriched.

Then came the boy-king Edward, called The Martyr, from the manner of his death. Elfrida had a son, named Ethelred, for whom she claimed the throne; but Dunstan did not favor him, and he made Edward king. The boy was hunting one day, when he rode near where Elfrida and Ethelred lived. Wishing to see them kindly, he rode away from his attendants and galloped to the castle-gate, where he arrived at twilight, and blew his hunting-horn. "You are welcome, dear king," said Elfrida. "Pray you dismount and enter." "Not so, dear madam," said the king. "My company will miss me, and fear that I have met with some harm. Please you to give me a cup of wine, that I may drink here in the saddle to you and to my little brother, and so ride away." Elfrida, going in to bring the wine, whispered to an armed servant, who stole out and crept behind the king's horse. As the king raised the cup to his lips, saying "Health!" to the wicked woman who was smiling on him, and to his innocent brother whose hand she held in hers, this armed man stabbed him in the back.

Then came the sixth and last of the boy-kings, Ethelred. The people so disliked this boy, on account of his cruel mother and the murder she had done to promote him, that Dunstan would not have had him for king, but would have made Edgitha, the daughter of the dead king

Edgar and of the lady whom he stole out of the convent at Wilton, Queen of England, if she would have consented. But she would not be persuaded from the convent where she lived in peace; so Dunstan put Ethelred on the throne and gave him the nickname of "The Unready," knowing that he wanted resolution and firmness. At first Elfrida possessed great influence over the young king; but as he grew older her influence declined. Not having it in her power to do any more evil, she retired from court, and, after the fashion of the time, built churches and monasteries to expiate her guilt.

About the tenth year of this reign Dunstan died, and the monks settled that he was a saint, and called him St. Dunstan ever afterwards.

Ethelred was glad to be rid of this holy saint; but, left to himself, he was a poor, weak king, and his reign was one of defeat and shame. The restless Danes, led by Sweyn, a son of the King of Denmark, who had quarrelled with his father and had been banished from home, again came into England, and year after year attacked and despoiled large towns. To coax these sea-kings away the weak Ethelred paid them money; but the more money he paid the more money they wanted. As they still came back and wanted more, he thought it would be a good plan to marry into some powerful foreign family that would help him with soldiers. So in the year 1002 he married Emma, the sister of Richard, Duke of Normandy—a lady who was called the Flower of Normandy.

And now a terrible deed was done in England, the like of which was never done on English ground before or since. On November 13, in pursuance of secret instructions sent by the king, the inhabitants of every town and city armed themselves, and murdered all the Danes who were their neighbors. Young and old, babies and soldiers, men and women—every Dane was killed. They were all slain, even to Gunhilda, the sister of the King

of Denmark married to an English lord, who was first obliged to see the murder of her husband and her child, and was then herself killed.

When the king of the sea-kings heard of this deed of blood he swore that he would have a great revenge. He raised an army and a mightier fleet of ships than ever yet had sailed to England. And in all his army there was not a slave nor an old man; but every soldier was a freeman and in the prime of life, and sworn to be revenged upon the English nation for that dread massacre. And so the sea-kings came to England in many great ships, each bearing the flag of its own commander. The ship that bore the standard of the king of the sea-kings was carved and painted like a mighty serpent; and the king, in his anger, prayed that the gods in whom he trusted might all desert him if his serpent did not strike its fangs into England's heart.

And it did; for the great army, landing near Exeter, went forward, laying England waste. In remembrance of the black November night when the Danes were murdered, wheresoever the invaders came they made the Saxons spread for them great feasts; and when they had eaten those feasts, and had drunk a curse to England with wild rejoicings, they drew their swords, and killed their Saxon entertainers, and marched on. For six long years they carried on this war; burning the crops, farm-houses, barns, mills, granaries; killing the laborers in the fields; preventing the seeds from being sown in the ground; causing famine and starvation; leaving only heaps of ruin and smoking ashes where they had found rich towns. To crown this misery, English officers and men deserted; and even the favorites of Ethelred, becoming traitors, seized many of the English ships, turned pirates against their own country, and, aided by a storm, occasioned the loss of nearly the whole English navy.

There was but one man of note who was true to his

country and the feeble king. He was a priest, and a brave one. For twenty days the Archbishop of Canterbury defended that city against its Danish besiegers; and when a traitor in the town threw the gates open and admitted them, he said, in chains, "I will not buy my life with money that must be extorted from the suffering people. Do with me what you please!" He steadily refused to purchase his release with gold wrung from the poor.

The Danes gathered round him, threatening, but he stood unmoved. Then one man struck him; then another; then a cursing soldier picked up from a heap in the corner of the hall a great ox-bone and cast it at his face, from which the blood came spurting forth; then others ran to the same heap and knocked him down with other bones, and bruised and battered him, until one soldier struck him dead with his battle-axe.

If Ethelred had had the courage of this noble archbishop, he might have done something yet. But he paid the Danes large sums, instead, and gained so little by the cowardly act that Sweyn soon afterwards came over to subdue all England. So broken was the attachment of the English people, by this time, to their incapable king, that they welcomed Sweyn as a deliverer. London stood out as long as the king was within its walls, but when he sneaked away it also welcomed the Dane. Then all was over, and the king took refuge abroad with the Duke of Normandy, who had given shelter to the king's wife and children.

Still the English people, in spite of their sufferings, could not forget the great King Alfred and the Saxon race. When Sweyn died suddenly, about a month after he had been proclaimed King of England, they generously sent to Ethelred, to say that they would make him king again "if he would govern them better than he had governed them before." The Unready sent one of his sons to make promises for him. At last he followed, and the English declared him king. The Danes declared Canute,

the son of Sweyn, king. Thus direful war began again, and lasted for three years, when The Unready died.

Was Canute to be king now? Not over the Saxons, they said; they must have Edmund (one of the sons of The Unready), who was surnamed Ironside because of his strength and stature. Edmund and Canute thereupon fought five battles; and then Ironside, who was a big man, proposed to Canute, who was a little man, that they two should fight it out in single combat. Canute decidedly said No, but declared that he was willing to divide the kingdom—to take all that lay north of Watling Street, as the old Roman military road from Dover to Chester was called, and to give Ironside all that lay south of it. Most men being weary of so much bloodshed, this was done. But Canute soon became sole King of England, for Ironside died suddenly within two months. Some think that he was killed by Canute's orders. No one knows.

CHAPTER V.

CANUTE, THE DANE.

CANUTE reigned eighteen years. He was a merciless king at first. After he had clasped the hands of the Saxon chiefs, in token of the sincerity with which he swore to be just to them in return for their acknowledging him, he denounced and slew many of them. "He who brings me the head of one of my enemies," he used to say, "shall be dearer to me than a brother." He was inclined to kill Edmund and Edward, two children, sons of poor Ironside; but, being afraid to do so in England, he sent them over to the King of Sweden, with a request that the king would

CANUTE AND THE SEA. (37)

"dispose of them." But the King of Sweden was a kind man, and brought them up tenderly.

Normandy ran much in Canute's mind. In Normandy were the two children of the late king—Edward and Alfred, by name—and their uncle, the duke, might one day claim the crown for them. But the duke showed so little inclination to do so now that he proposed to Canute to marry his sister, the widow of The Unready, who, desiring to become a queen again, left her children and was wedded to him.

Successful and triumphant, assisted by the valor of the English in his foreign wars, and with little strife at home, Canute had a prosperous reign, and made many improvements. He was a poet and a musician. He grew sorry, as he grew older, for the blood he had shed at first, and went to Rome in a pilgrim's dress by way of washing it out. On the whole, however, he became a far better man when he had no opposition to contend with, and was as great a king as England had known for some time.

The old writers relate how Canute was one day disgusted with his courtiers for their flattery, and how he caused his chair to be set on the sea-shore and commanded the tide, as it came up, not to wet the edge of his robe, for the land was his; how the tide came up, of course, without regarding him, and how he then turned to his flatterers and rebuked them, saying, What was the might of any earthly king to the might of the Creator, who could say unto the sea "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther!"

It is not the sea alone that is bidden to go "Thus far, and no farther." The great command goes forth to all the kings upon the earth, and went to Canute in the year 1035, and stretched him dead upon his bed.

CHAPTER VI.

HAROLD HAREFOOT, HARDICANUTE, AND EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

CANUTE left three sons, named Sweyn, Harold and Hardicanute; but his queen, Emma, was the mother of only Hardicanute. Canute wished his dominions divided between the three, Harold to have England; but the Saxon people in the south of England, headed by a nobleman, with great possessions, called Earl Godwin, opposed this, and wanted either Hardicanute or one of the two exiled princes who were over in Normandy. It was agreed to refer the matter to a great meeting at Oxford, which decided that Harold should have all the country north of the Thames, with London for his capital city, and that Hardicanute should have all the south. The quarrel was so arranged, and as Hardicanute was in Denmark, his mother and Earl Godwin governed the south for him.

They had hardly begun to do so when Edward, the elder of the two exiled princes, came over from Normandy with a few followers to claim the English crown. His mother Emma, who cared only for her last son, Hardicanute, opposed him so strongly that he was glad to get safely back. His brother Alfred was not so fortunate. Believing in a letter written in his mother's name, he allowed himself to be tempted over to England with a good force of soldiers, and landing on the Kentish coast, and being met and welcomed by Earl Godwin, proceeded into Surrey, as far as the town of Guildford. Here he and his men halted in the evening to rest, having still the earl in the

company, who had ordered lodgings and good cheer for them. In the dead of the night they were set upon by the king's troops and taken prisoners. Next day six hundred of them were drawn out in a line, tortured and killed, with the exception of every tenth man, who was sold into slavery. Prince Alfred was stripped naked, tied to a horse, and sent away into the Isle of Ely, where his eyes were torn out of his head, and where, in a few days, he died.

Harold was now king over all England. He was king for four years, after which short reign he died and was buried, having never done much in life but go a-hunting. He was such a fast runner that the people called him Harold Harefoot.

Hardicanute was then at Bruges, in Flanders, plotting with his mother for the invasion of England. The Danes and Saxons, finding themselves without a king and dreading new disputes, joined in inviting him to occupy the throne. He consented, and soon troubled them enough, for he brought over numbers of Danes, and so taxed the people to enrich those greedy favorites that there were many insurrections, especially one at Worcester, where the citizens rose and killed his tax-collectors; in revenge for which he burned their city. He was a brutal king, whose first public act was to order the dead body of poor Harold Harefoot to be dug up, beheaded and thrown into the river. His end was worthy of such a beginning. He fell down drunk, and never spoke again.

Edward, afterwards called The Confessor, succeeded. He obliged his mother Emma to retire into the country, where she died some ten years afterwards. He was the exiled prince whose brother Alfred had been so foully killed. He had been invited over from Normandy by Hardicanute, and had been well treated at court. His cause was favored by Earl Godwin, and he was soon made king. This earl had been tried for the prince's murder, but had been pronounced not guilty. It was his interest to help the

new king with his power, if the new king would help him against the popular distrust and hatred. So they made a bargain. Edward the Confessor got the throne. The earl got more power and more land, and his daughter Editha was made queen; for it was a part of their compact that the king should take her for his wife.

But, although she was a gentle lady, in all things worthy to be beloved—good, beautiful, sensible and kind—the king from the first neglected her. Her father and her six proud brothers, resenting this cold treatment, harassed the king greatly by exerting all their power to make him unpopular. Having lived so long in Normandy, he preferred the Normans to the English. He made a Norman archbishop and Norman bishops; his great officers and favorites were all Normans; he introduced the Norman fashions and the Norman language; in imitation of the state custom of Normandy, he attached a great seal to his state documents, instead of merely marking them, as the Saxon kings had done, with the sign of the cross—just as people who cannot write now make the same mark for their names. All this Earl Godwin and his six proud sons represented to the people as disfavor shown towards the English, and thus they daily increased their own power and daily diminished the power of the king.

Edward got Godwin and his six sons out of his way, and favored the Normans more than ever. He invited over William, Duke of Normandy, the son of that duke who had received him and his murdered brother long ago. William accepted the invitation, and the Normans in England, finding themselves more numerous than ever when he arrived with his retinue, and held in still greater honor at court than before, became more haughty towards the people, and were more disliked by them.

The old Earl Godwin knew well how the people felt, for he kept paid spies and agents all over England. Accordingly, he thought the time was come for fitting out a

great expedition against the Norman-loving king. With it he sailed to the Isle of Wight, where he was joined by his son Harold, the bravest of all his family. And so the father and son went sailing up the Thames to Southwark, great numbers of the people declaring for them, and shouting for the English earl and the English Harold, against the Norman favorites.

The king was at first as blind and stubborn as kings usually have been. But the people rallied so thickly around the old earl and his son, and the old earl was so steady in demanding, without bloodshed, the restoration of himself and his family to their rights, that at last the court took the alarm. The Norman Archbishop of Canterbury and the Norman Bishop of London, surrounded by their retainers, fought their way out of London, and escaped from Essex to France in a fishing-boat. The other Norman favorites dispersed in all directions. The old earl and his sons, except Sweyn, who had committed crimes against the law, were restored to their possessions and dignities.

Godwin did not long enjoy his restored fortune. He fell down in a fit at the king's table, and died upon the third day afterwards. Harold succeeded to his power, and to a far higher place in the attachment of the people than his father had ever held. He subdued the king's enemies in many bloody fights, and was vigorous against rebels in Scotland. He was driven on the French coast by a tempest, and was taken prisoner. In those days all shipwrecked strangers were taken prisoners and obliged to pay ransom.

Harold sent to Duke William of Normandy complaining of this treatment, and the duke ordered him to be escorted to Rouen, where he received him as an honored guest. Some writers tell us that Edward the Confessor had made a will, appointing Duke William of Normandy his successor. He was anxious about his successor, and invited over Edward the Outlaw, a son of Ironside, who had come to

England with his wife and three children, but whom the king had strangely refused to see when he did come, and who had died in London suddenly (princes were terribly liable to sudden death in those days), and had been buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. The king might have made such a will, or he might have encouraged William to aspire to the English crown by something that he said to him. But certainly William did not now aspire to it, and, knowing that Harold would be a powerful rival, he called together a great assembly of his nobles, offered Harold his daughter Adele in marriage, informed him that he meant, on King Edward's death, to claim the English crown, and required Harold then and there to swear to aid him. Harold, being in the duke's power, took this oath upon the missal, or prayer-book. This missal, instead of being placed upon a table, was placed upon a tub, which, when Harold had sworn, was uncovered, and shown to be full of dead men's bones—bones, as the monks pretended, of saints. This was supposed to make Harold's oath more impressive and binding.

Within a week or two after Harold's return to England The Confessor was found to be dying. As he had put himself entirely in the hands of the monks when he was alive, they praised him lustily when he was dead.

CHAPTER VII.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

HAROLD was crowned King of England on the day of The Confessor's funeral. When the news reached William, he called his nobles to council and sent to Harold, calling on him to keep his oath and resign the crown. Harold would

do no such thing. The barons of France leagued around William for the invasion of England. William promised to distribute English wealth and English lands among them. The pope sent to Normandy a consecrated banner and blessed the enterprise.

King Harold had a rebel brother in Flanders who was a vassal of the King of Norway. This brother and this Norwegian king, joining their forces against England, with William's help won a fight, and then besieged York. Harold, who was waiting for the Normans on the coast at Hastings with his army, marched to give them instant battle.

And such a fight did Harold lead against that force that his brother and the Norwegian king, and every chief of note in all their host, were left dead upon the field. The victorious army marched to York. As Harold sat there at the feast, messengers came hurrying in to report that the Normans had landed in England.

The intelligence was true. They had been tossed about by contrary winds, and some of their ships had been wrecked. A part of their own shore, to which they had been driven back, was strewn with Norman bodies. But they once more made sail, led by the duke's own galley. By day the banner of the Three Lions of Normandy had glittered in the sun; by night a light had sparkled like a star at her mast-head. And now, camped near Hastings, with the English retiring in all directions, the land for miles around scorched and smoking, fired and pillaged, was the whole Norman power, hopeful and strong, on English ground.

Harold broke up the feast and hurried to London. Within a week his army was ready. He sent out spies to ascertain the Norman strength. William took them, caused them to be led through his camp, and then dismissed. "The Normans," said these spies to Harold, "are not bearded on the upper lip as we English are, but are

shorn. They are priests." "My men," replied Harold, with a laugh, "will find those priests good soldiers!"

Proposals for a reconciliation were made but abandoned. In the middle of October, 1066, the Normans and the English came front to front. All night the armies lay camped before each other in a part of the country then called Senlac, now called Battle. With the first dawn of day they arose. There, in the faint light, were the English on a hill; a wood behind them; in their midst the royal banner representing a fighting warrior, woven in gold thread, adorned with precious stones; beneath the banner stood King Harold on foot, with two of his brothers by his side; around them, still and silent as the dead, clustered the whole English army—every soldier covered by his shield and bearing in his hand his dreaded English battle-axe.

On an opposite hill, in three lines, archers, foot-soldiers, horsemen, was the Norman force. Of a sudden a great battle-cry, "God help us!" burst from the Norman lines. The English answered with their own battle-cry, "God's Rood! Holy Rood!" The Normans then came sweeping down the hill to attack the English.

The English, keeping side by side, in a great mass, cared no more for the showers of Norman arrows than if they had been showers of rain. When the Norman horsemen rode against them, with their battle-axes they cut men and horses down. The Normans gave way. The English pressed forward. A cry went forth among the Norman troops that William was killed. He took off his helmet, in order that his face might be seen, and rode along the line encouraging his men. As they turned again to face the English, some of their Norman horse divided the pursuing body of the English from the rest, and thus all that foremost portion of the English army fell, fighting bravely. The main body still remaining firm, heedless of the Norman arrows, and with their battle-axes cutting down the crowds of horsemen when they rode up, William pre-

tended to retreat. The eager English followed. The Norman army closed again, and fell upon them with great slaughter.

"Still," said William, "there are thousands of the English firm as rocks around their king. Shoot upward, that your arrows may fall down upon their faces."

The sun rose high and sank, and the battle still raged. Through all that wild October day the clash and din resounded in the air. In the red sunset and in the white moonlight heaps of dead men lay strewed all over the ground. Harold, wounded with an arrow in the eye, was nearly blind. His brothers were already killed. Twenty Norman knights, whose battered armor had flashed fiery and golden in the sunshine all day long, and now looked silvery in the moonlight, dashed forward to seize the royal banner from the English knights and soldiers still faithfully collected around their blinded king. The king received a mortal wound and dropped. The English broke and fled. The Normans rallied, and the day was lost.

The victorious William pitched his tent near the spot where Harold fell, and he and his knights were carousing within; and soldiers with torches sought for the corpse of Harold among piles of dead; and the warrior, worked in golden thread and precions stones, lay low, all torn and soiled with blood; and the three Norman lions kept watch over the field.

Upon the ground where the brave Harold fell William the Norman afterwards founded an abbey, which, under the name of Battle Abbey, was a splendid place through many a troubled year, though now it is a gray ruin overgrown with ivy. But the first work he had to do was to conquer the English thoroughly, and that was hard work for any man.

He ravaged several counties; he burned and plundered many towns; he laid waste scores upon scores of miles of pleasant country; he destroyed innumerable lives. At

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

length the Archbishop of Canterbury, with other representatives of the clergy and the people, went to his camp, and submitted to him. Edgar, the son of Edmund Ironside, was proclaimed king by others, but nothing came of it. He fled to Scotland afterwards, where his sister married the Scottish king. Edgar himself was not important enough for anybody to care much about him.

On Christmas day William was crowned in Westminster Abbey under the title of William I., but he is best known as William the Conqueror. When the crown was placed upon his head he swore to govern the English as well as the best of their own monarchs.

Numbers of the English nobles had been killed in the last battle. Their estates William seized, and gave to his own Norman knights and nobles. Many great English families of the present time acquired their English lands in this way, and are very proud of it.

But what is got by force must be maintained by force. These nobles were obliged to build castles all over England to defend their new property, but the king could neither soothe nor quell the nation as he wished. He gradually introduced the Norman language and the Norman customs, yet for a long time the great body of the English remained sullen and revengeful. On his going over to Normandy, to visit his subjects there, the oppressions of his half-brother Odo, whom he left in charge of his English kingdom, drove the people mad. The men of Kent invited over Count Eustace of Boulogne to take possession of Dover. The men of Pereford, aided by the Welsh, and commanded by Edric the Wild, drove the Normans out of their country. Some of those who had been dispossessed of their lands banded together in the north of England, some in Scotland, some in the thick woods and marshes, and whensoever they could fall upon the Normans, or upon the English who had submitted to the Normans, they fought, despoiled and murdered, like

the desperate outlaws they were. Conspiracies were set on foot for a general massacre of the Normans, like the

HAROLD, THE LAST OF THE SAXON KINGS.

old massacre of the Danes. The English were in a murderous mood all through the kingdom.

King William, fearing he might lose his conquest, came back and tried to pacify the London people by soft words. He then set forth to repress the country people by stern

deeds. Among the towns which he besieged, and where he killed and maimed the inhabitants without any distinction, sparing none, young or old, armed or unarmed, were Oxford, Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Lincoln, York. In all these places, and in many others, fire and sword worked their utmost horrors, and made the land dreadful to behold. Although William was a harsh and angry man, I do not suppose that he meant to work this shocking ruin when he invaded England. But what he had got by the strong hand he could only keep by the strong hand, and in so doing he made England a great grave.

Two sons of Harold, by name Edmund and Godwin, came over from Ireland with some ships against the Normans, but were defeated. This was scarcely done when the outlaws in the woods so harassed York that the governor sent to the king for help. The king despatched a large force to occupy the town of Durham. The bishop of that place met the general outside the town and warned him not to enter, as he would be in danger there. The general cared nothing for the warning, and went in with all his men. That night, on every hill within sight of Durham, signal-fires were seen to blaze. When the morning dawned, the English, who had assembled in great strength, forced the gates, rushed into the town, and slew the Normans, every one. The English afterwards besought the Danes to come and help them. The Danes came with two hundred and forty ships. The outlawed nobles joined them; they captured York, and drove the Normans out of that city. Then William bribed the Danes to go away, and took such vengeance on the English that all the former fire and sword, smoke and ashes, death and ruin, were nothing compared with it. In songs and doleful stories it was sung and told that there was not, from the river Humber to the river Tyne, one inhabited village left, nor one cultivated field—how

there was nothing but a dismal ruin, where the human creatures and the beasts lay dead together.

Very soon afterwards the king, victorious both in Scotland and in England, quelled the last rebellious English noble. He then surrounded himself with Norman lords, enriched by the property of English nobles; had a great survey made of all the land in England, which was entered as the property of its new owners on a roll called Doomsday-Book; obliged the people to put out their fires and candles at a certain hour every night, on the ringing of a bell which was called The Curfew; introduced the Norman dresses and manners; made the Normans masters everywhere and the English servants; turned out the English bishops and put Normans in their places, and showed himself to be The Conqueror indeed.

But even with his own Normans he had a restless life. They were always hungering and thirsting for the riches of the English, and the more he gave the more they wanted. His priests were as greedy as his soldiers.

Beside all these troubles, William was troubled by quarrels among his sons. He had three living—Robert, William (called Rufus, or the Red, from the color of his hair), and Henry (fond of learning, called Fine-Scholar). When Robert grew up he asked for Normandy, which he had nominally possessed, as a child, under his mother Matilda. The king refusing to grant it, Robert became discontented and hotly departed with some followers, and endeavored to take the Castle of Rouen by surprise. Failing in this, he shut himself up in another castle in Normandy, which the king besieged, and where Robert one day nearly killed him without knowing who he was. His submission and the queen's intercession reconciled them, but not soundly, for Robert soon strayed abroad, and went from court to court with his complaints. He was a gay, careless, thoughtless fellow, spending all he got on musicians and dancers; but his mother loved him, and

often, against the king's command, supplied him with money.

All this time, from the turbulent day of his strange coronation, The Conqueror had been struggling, at any cost of cruelty and bloodshed, to maintain what he had seized. All his reign he struggled still, with the same object before him. He was a stern, bold man, and he succeeded in it.

He loved money, and was particular in his eating; but he had only leisure to indulge one other passion, and that was his love of hunting. He carried it to such a height that he ordered whole villages and towns to be swept away to make forests for the deer. Not satisfied with sixty-eight royal forests, he laid waste an immense district to form another called the New Forest. The many thousands of miserable peasants who saw their little houses pulled down, and themselves and children turned into the open country without a shelter, detested him for his merciless addition to their many sufferings; and when, in the 21st year of his reign, he went over to Rouen, England was as full of hatred against him as if every leaf on every tree in all his royal forests had been a curse upon his head. In the New Forest his son Richard (for he then had four sons) had been gored to death by a stag, and the people said that this so cruelly-made forest would yet be fatal to others of The Conqueror's race.

He had a dispute with the King of France about some territory. While he stayed at Rouen, negotiating with that king, he kept his bed and took medicines, on account of having grown to an unwieldly size. Word being brought to him that the King of France joked about it, he swore in a great rage that he should rue his jests. He assembled his army, marched into the disputed territory, burnt the vines, the crops and fruit, and set the town of Nantes on fire—but in an evil hour; for, as he rode over the hot ruins, his horse, setting his hoofs upon some burning embers, started, threw him forward against the pom-

mel of the saddle, and gave him a mortal hurt. For six weeks he lay dying in a monastery near Rouen, and then made his will, giving England to William, Normandy to

BURIAL OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Robert, and five thousand pounds to Henry. And now his violent deeds lay heavy on his mind. He ordered money to be given to many English churches and monasteries, and—which was much better repentance—re-

leased his prisoners of state, some of whom had been confined in his dungeons twenty years.

One morning the king was awakened by the sound of a church-bell. "What bell is that?" he faintly asked. They told him it was the bell of the chapel of Saint Mary. "I commend my soul," said he, "to Mary!" and died.

Think of his name, The Conqueror, and then consider how he lay in death! The moment he was dead, his physicians, priests, and nobles, not knowing what contest for the throne might now take place, hastened away, each man for himself and his own property; the mercenary servants of the court began to rob and plunder; the body of the king, in the indecent strife, was rolled from the bed, and lay alone for hours upon the ground. O Conqueror! of whom so many great names are proud now, of whom so many great names thought nothing then, it were better to have conquered one true heart than England.

By and by the priests came creeping in with prayers and candles, and a good knight undertook to convey the body to Caen, in Normandy, in order that it might be buried in St. Stephen's Church there, which The Conqueror had founded. But fire, of which he had made such bad use in his life, seemed to follow him of itself in death. A great conflagration broke out in the town when the body was placed in the church, and those present running out to extinguish the flames, it was once again left alone.

It was not even buried in peace. It was about to be let down in its royal robes into a tomb near the high altar, in presence of a great concourse of people, when a loud voice in the crowd cried out, "This ground is mine! Upon it stood my father's house. This king despoiled me of both ground and house to build this church. In the great name of God I here forbid this body to be covered with the earth that is my right!" The bishops present, knowing the speaker's right, and that the king had denied him justice, paid him down sixty shillings for the grave. Even

then the corpse was not at rest. The tomb was too small, and they tried to force it in. It broke, a dreadful smell arose, the people hurried out into the air, and for the third time it was left alone.

Where were The Conqueror's three sons, that they were not at their father's burial? Robert was lounging among minstrels, dancers and gamesters in France or Germany. Henry was carrying his five thousand pounds safely away in a chest he had made. William the Red was hurrying to England to lay his hands upon the royal treasure and the crown.

CHAPTER VIII.

WILLIAM II.

WILLIAM THE RED, in breathless haste, secured the three great forts of Dover, Pevensey and Hastings, and made with hot speed for Winchester, where the royal treasure was kept. The treasurer delivering him the keys, he found sixty thousand pounds in silver, besides gold and jewels. Possessed of this wealth, he soon persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury to crown him, and became William the Second, King of England.

Rufus was no sooner on the throne than he ordered into prison again the unhappy state captives whom his father had set free, and ornamented his father's tomb profusely with gold and silver. It would have been more dutiful in him to have attended the sick Conquerer when he was dying; but England itself, like this Red King who once governed it, has sometimes made expensive tombs for dead men whom it treated shabbily when they were alive.

The king's brother, Robert of Normandy, seeming quite

content to be only duke of that country, and the king's other brother, Fine-Scholar, being quiet enough with his money, the king flattered himself with the hope of an easy reign. But easy reigns were difficult to have in those days. The turbulent Bishop Odo (who had blessed the Norman army at the battle of Hastings, and who took all the credit of the victory to himself) soon began, in concert with some powerful Norman nobles, to trouble the king.

The truth seems to be that this bishop and his friends, who had lands in England and in Normandy, wished to hold both under one sovereign, and preferred the good-natured Robert to Rufus, who was keen and not to be imposed upon. They declared in Robert's favor, and retired to their castles in a sullen humor. The Red King, seeing the Normans thus falling from him, revenged himself upon them by appealing to the English, to whom he promised to soften the cruelty of the forest laws, and who, in return, so aided him that Odo was forced to depart from England forever; whereupon the other rebellious Norman nobles were soon reduced and scattered.

Then the Red King went over to Normandy to seize upon the duke's dominions. This the duke prepared to resist, and war between the two brothers seemed inevitable, when the nobles on both sides interfered to prevent it. A treaty was made. Each of the two brothers agreed to give up something of his claims, and that the longer-lived of the two should inherit all the dominions of the other. When they had come to this loving understanding they joined their forces against Fine-Scholar, who had bought some territory of Robert with a part of his money, and was considered a dangerous individual in consequence.

St. Michael's Mount in Normandy is a strong place, perched upon the top of a high rock, around which, when the tide is in, the sea flows, leaving no road to the main land. In this place Fine-Scholar shut himself up with his soldiers, and here he was closely besieged by his two

WILLIAM RUFUS.

brothers. Fine-Scholar could not hold out against his united brothers, and he abandoned St. Michael and wandered about, as poor and forlorn as other scholars have been sometimes known to be.

The Scotch became unquiet and were twice defeated—the second time with the loss of their king, Malcolm, and his son. The Welsh became unquiet, too. Against them Rufus was less successful, for they fought among their native mountains, and did great execution to the king's troops. Robert of Normandy became unquiet, too, and complaining that his brother, the king, did not faithfully perform his part of their agreement, took up arms and obtained assistance from the King of France, whom Rufus, in the end, bought off with vast sums of money.

The Red King was false of heart, selfish, covetous and mean. Once the king, being ill, became penitent, and made Anselm, a foreign priest and a good man, Archbishop of Canterbury. But he no sooner got well again than he repented of his repentance, and persisted in wrongfully keeping to himself some of the wealth belonging to the archbishopric. This led to violent disputes, which were aggravated by there being in Rome, at that time, two rival popes, each of whom declared he was the only real, original, infallible pope, who couldn't make a mistake. At last Anselm, not feeling safe in England, asked leave to return abroad. The Red King gladly gave it, for he knew that as soon as Anselm was gone he could begin to store up all the Canterbury money for his own use.

By such means, and by taxing and oppressing the English people in every possible way, the Red King became very rich. Having the opportunity of buying from Robert the whole duchy of Normandy for five years, he taxed the English people more than ever, and made the very convents sell their plate and valuables to supply him with the means to make the purchase. But he was as quick and eager in putting down revolt as he was in raising money;

for, a part of the Norman people objecting to being sold in this way, he headed an army against them with all the speed and energy of his father. He was so impatient that he embarked for Normandy in a great gale of wind, and when the sailors told him it was dangerous to go to sea in such angry weather, he replied, "Hoist sail and away! Did you ever hear of a king who was drowned?"

You will wonder how it was that even careless Robert came to sell his dominions. It happened thus: It had long been the custom for many English people to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem that they might pray beside the tomb of our Saviour there. Jerusalem belonging to the Turks, and the Turks hating Christianity, these travellers were often ill-used. The pilgrims bore it patiently for some time, but at length a man of great earnestness and eloquence, called Peter the Hermit, began to preach in various places against the Turks, and to declare that it was the duty of good Christians to drive away those unbelievers from the tomb of our Saviour, and to take possession of it and protect it. An excitement such as the world had never known before was created. Thousands of men, of all ranks and conditions, departed for Jerusalem to make war against the Turks. The war is called in history the First Crusade, and every Crusader wore a cross marked on his right shoulder.

All the Crusaders were not zealous Christians. Among them were vast numbers of the restless, idle, profligate and adventurous spirits of the time. Some became Crusaders for the love of change; some in hope of plunder; some because they had nothing to do at home; some because they did what the priests told them; some because they liked to see foreign countries; some because they were fond of knocking men about, and would as soon knock a Turk about as a Christian. Robert of Normandy wanted to raise a number of armed men and go to the Crusade. He could not do so without money. He had no money,

and he sold his dominions to his brother, the Red King, for five years. With the large sum thus obtained he fitted out his Crusaders gallantly, and went away to Jerusalem in martial state. The Red King, who made money out of everything, stayed at home, busily squeezing more money out of Normans and English.

After three years of great hardship and suffering, from shipwreck at sea, from travel in strange lands, from hunger, thirst and fever, upon the burning sands of the desert and from the fury of the Turks, the valiant Crusaders got possession of our Saviour's tomb. The Turks were still resisting and fighting bravely, but this success increased the general desire in Europe to join the Crusade. Another great French duke was proposing to sell his dominions for a term to the rich Red King, when his reign came to a sudden and violent end.

You have not forgotten the New Forest which The Conqueror made, and which the miserable people whose homes he had laid waste so hated. The cruelty of the forest laws, and the torture and death they brought upon the peasantry, increased this hatred. The poor country-people believed that the New Forest was enchanted. And now, in the pleasant season of May, when the Red King had reigned almost thirteen years, and a second prince of The Conqueror's blood—another Richard, the son of Duke Robert—was killed by an arrow in this dreaded forest, the people said that the second time was not the last, and that there was another death to come.

The Red King, now reconciled to his brother, Fine-Scholar, came with a great train to hunt in the New Forest. Fine-Scholar was of the party, which was a merry one. The king took with him only Walter Tyrrel, who was a famous sportsman.

The last time the king was ever seen alive he was riding with Tyrrel, and their dogs were hunting together.

It was almost night when a poor charcoal-burner, pass-

ing through the forest with his cart, came upon the solitary body of a dead man, shot with an arrow in the breast, and still bleeding. He got it into his cart. It was the body of the king. Shaken and tumbled, with his red beard all whitened with lime and clotted with blood, it was driven in the cart by the charcoal-burner, next day, to Winchester Cathedral, where it was received and buried.

Tyrrel, who escaped to Normandy and claimed the protection of the King of France, swore, in France, that the Red King was suddenly shot dead by an arrow from an unseen hand while they were hunting together; that he was fearful of being suspected as the king's murderer, and fled to the sea-shore.

By whose hand the Red King really fell is only known to God. Men know no more than that he was found dead in the New Forest, which the suffering people had regarded as a doomed ground for his race.

CHAPTER IX.

HENRY I.

FINE-SCHOLAR, on hearing of the Red King's death, hurried to Winchester with as much speed as Rufus himself had made, and got hold of the royal treasure. On the third day after the death of the Red King, Fine-Scholar stood before the high altar in Westminster Abbey and made a solemn declaration that he would resign the Church property which his brother had seized, that he would do no wrong to the nobles, and that he would restore to the people the laws of Edward the Confessor, with all the improvements of William the Conqueror. So began the reign of King Henry I.

The people were attached to their new king, because he was an Englishman by birth, and not a Norman. To strengthen this last hold upon them the king wished to marry an English lady, and selected Maud the Good, the daughter of the King of Scotland. This princess did not love the king, but thinking to unite the Norman and Saxon races, and prevent bloodshed between them for the future, she consented to become his wife. A good queen she was —beautiful, kind-hearted, and worthy of a better husband than the king, for he was a cunning and unscrupulous man, though firm and clever. He cared little for his word, and took any means to gain his ends.

Before the king began to deal with his brother Robert he removed and disgraced all the favorites of the late king, who were for the most part base characters, much detested by the people.

Now, Robert was absent in the Holy Land. Henry pretended that Robert had been made sovereign of that country, and he had been away so long that the people believed it. But when Henry had been some time King of England Robert came home to Normandy, having leisurely returned from Jerusalem through Italy, where he had married a beautiful lady. In Normandy he found people waiting to urge him to assert his claim to the English crown and declare war against King Henry. This, after great loss of time, he did.

The English in general were on King Henry's side, though many of the Normans were on Robert's. But the English sailors deserted the king and took a great part of the English fleet over to Normandy, so that Robert came to invade the country in English ships. Anselm, whom Henry invited back and made Archbishop of Canterbury, was steadfast in the king's cause, and it was so well supported that the two armies, instead of fighting, made a peace. Poor Robert, who trusted everybody, readily trusted his brother, the king, and agreed to go home and

HENRY I.

receive a pension from England, on condition that all his followers were pardoned. This the king promised, but Robert was no sooner gone than he began to punish them.

Among them was the Earl of Shrewsbury, who, on being summoned by the king to answer to many accusations, shut himself up in one of his castles, called around him his tenants and vassals, and fought for his liberty, but was defeated and banished. Robert, with all his faults, was so true to his word that, when he first heard of this nobleman having risen against his brother, he laid waste Shrewsbury's estates in Normandy, to show the king that he would favor no breach of their treaty. Finding that the earl's only crime was having been his friend, he came over to England, in his old warm-hearted way, to intercede with the king and remind him of the promise to pardon all his followers.

This confidence might have put the false king to the blush, but it did not. Pretending to be friendly, he so surrounded his brother with spies and traps that Robert, who was quite in his power, had nothing for it but to escape while he could. Getting home to Normandy, he allied himself with his old friend, the Earl of Shrewsbury, who had still thirty castles in that country. This was exactly what Henry wanted. He immediately declared that Robert had broken the treaty, and next year invaded Normandy.

He pretended that he came to deliver the Normans, at their own request, from his brother's misrule. There is reason to fear that his misrule was bad enough. Robert headed his army like a brave prince and a gallant soldier, though he had the misfortune to be taken prisoner by King Henry, with four hundred of his knights.

And Robert—poor, kind, generous, wasteful, heedless Robert, with so many faults, and yet with virtues that might have made a better and a happier man—what was the end of him? Henry sentenced his brother to be confined for

life in one of the royal castles. He was allowed to ride out guarded, but he one day broke away from his guard and galloped off. He had the evil fortune to ride into a swamp, where his horse stuck fast and he was taken. When the king heard of it he ordered him to be blinded, which was done by putting a red-hot metal basin on his eyes.

One day there lay in prison, dead, with cruel and disfiguring scars upon his eyelids, bandaged from his jailer's sight, a worn old man of eighty. He had once been Robert of Normandy.

At the time when Robert was taken prisoner by his brother, Robert's little son was only five years old. The king was not accustomed to pity those who were in his power, but his cold heart seemed for a moment to soften towards the boy. He ordered the child to be taken away, whereupon a baron, who had married a daughter of Duke Robert's, took charge of him tenderly. The king's gentleness did not last long. Before two years were over he sent messengers to this lord's castle to seize the child and bring him away, but the boy was carried off and hid. The baron took the child abroad, and went from king to king, relating how the child had a claim to the throne of England, and how his uncle, the king, would have murdered him, but for his escape.

When he became a man, the King of France supported his cause against the King of England, and took many of the king's towns and castles in Normandy. But Henry, artful and cunning always, bribed some of William's friends with money, some with promises, some with power. For all this, he was so afraid of William Fitz-Robert and his friends that for a long time he believed his life to be in danger, and never lay down to sleep without having a sword and buckler at his bedside.

To strengthen his power, the king betrothed his eldest daughter, Matilda, then a child only eight years old, to be the wife of Henry the Fifth, the Emperor of Germany. To

raise her marriage portion he taxed the English people oppressively, then treated them to a great procession to restore their good humor, and sent Matilda away, in fine state, with the German ambassadors, to be educated in the country of her future husband.

And now his queen, Maud the Good, unhappily died. At the time of her death Normandy and all France was in arms against England; for, so soon as his last danger was over, Henry had been false to all the French powers he had promised, bribed and bought, and they had naturally united against him. After some fighting, in which few suffered but the unhappy people, he began to promise, bribe and buy again; and by those means, and by the help of the pope, who exerted himself to save more bloodshed, and by solemnly declaring, over and over again, that he really was in earnest this time, and would keep his word, the king made peace.

One of the first consequences of this peace was, that the king went over to Normandy with his son Prince William and a great retinue, to have the prince acknowledged as his successor by the Norman nobles, and to contract the promised marriage between him and the daughter of the Count of Anjou. Both these things were done with great show and rejoicing, and the whole retinue embarked at the Port of Barfleur for the voyage home.

There were three hundred people in the gay company. The vessel was wrecked, and a poor butcher of Rouen alone was saved. In the morning some fishermen saw him floating in his sheepskin coat and got him into their boat—the sole relater of the dismal tale.

For three days no one dared to carry the intelligence to the king. At length they sent into his presence a little boy, who, weeping bitterly, told him that the ship was lost, with all on board. The king fell to the ground like a dead man, and never afterwards was seen to smile.

But he plotted again, and promised again, and bribed

and bought again, in his old, deceitful way. Having no son to succeed him after all his pains, he took a second wife—Alice, a duke's daughter, and the pope's niece. Having no more children, he proposed to the barons to swear that they would recognize as his successor his daughter Matilda, whom, as she was now a widow, he married to the eldest son of the Count of Anjou, Geoffrey, surnamed Plantagenet, from a custom he had of wearing a sprig of flowering broom (called genêt in French) in his cap for a feather. The barons took the oath about the succession of Matilda twice over, without in the least intending to keep it. The king was relieved from any fears of William Fitz-Robert by his death, in France; and, as Matilda gave birth to three sons, he thought the succession to the throne secure.

He spent most of the latter part of his life in Normandy, to be near Matilda. When he had reigned upwards of thirty-five years, and was sixty-seven years old, he died of an indigestion and fever. His remains were brought over to Reading Abbey to be buried.

You may perhaps hear the cunning and promise-breaking of King Henry I. called "policy" by some people, and "diplomacy" by others. Neither of these fine words will in the least mean that it was true; and nothing that is not true can possibly be good.

His greatest merit was his love of learning. He was avaricious, revengeful, and so false that a man never lived whose word was less to be relied upon.

CHAPTER X.

MATILDA AND STEPHEN.

THE king was no sooner dead than all the plans and schemes he had labored at so long, and lied so much for,

crumbled away like a hollow heap of sand. Stephen, whom he had never mistrusted, claimed the throne.

Stephen was the son of Henry's sister. To Stephen, and to his brother Henry, the late king had been liberal, making Henry Bishop of Winchester, and finding a good marriage for Stephen, and much enriching him. Stephen produced a servant of the late king to swear that the king had named him for his heir upon his death-bed. On this evidence the Archbishop of Canterbury crowned him. The new king lost not a moment in seizing the royal treasure, and hiring foreign soldiers with some of it to protect his throne.

The dead king had, in fact, bequeathed all his territory to Matilda, who, supported by Robert, Earl of Gloucester, soon began to dispute the crown. Some of the powerful barons and priests took her side; some took Stephen's; all fortified their castles; and again the English people were involved in war, from which they could never derive advantage whosoever was victorious, and in which all parties plundered, tortured, starved and ruined them.

Five years had passed since the death of Henry I. and during those five years there had been two terrible invasions by the people of Scotland under their King David, who was at last defeated with all his army—when Matilda, attended by her brother Robert and a large force, appeared in England to maintain her claim. A battle was fought between her troops and King Stephen's at Lincoln, in which the king himself was taken prisoner, after bravely fighting until his battle-axe and sword were broken, and was carried into strict confinement at Gloucester. Matilda then submitted herself to the priests, and the priests crowned her Queen of England.

She did not long enjoy this dignity. The people of London had a great affection for Stephen; many of the barons considered it degrading to be ruled by a woman, and the queen's temper was so haughty that she made

many enemies. The people of London revolted, and in alliance with the troops of Stephen besieged her at Win-

THE ESCAPE OF QUEEN MATILDA.

chester, where they took her brother Robert prisoner, whom, as her chief general, she was glad to exchange for

Stephen, who thus regained his liberty. Then the long war went on afresh. Once she was pressed so hard in the Castle of Oxford, when the snow lay thick upon the ground, that her only chance of escape was to dress herself all in white, and accompanied by three faithful knights dressed in like manner, that their figures might not be seen from Stephen's camp as they passed over the snow, to steal away on foot, cross the frozen Thames, walk a long distance, and at last gallop away on horseback. All this she did, but to no great purpose then; for, her brother dying while the struggle was going on, she withdrew to Normandy.

In two or three years her cause appeared afresh in the person of her son Henry, young Plantagenet, who, at eighteen years of age, was very powerful, not only on account of his mother having resigned all Normandy to him, but also from his having married Eleanor, the divorced wife of the French king, a bad woman, who had great possessions in France. Louis, the French king, not relishing this arrangement, helped Eustace, King Stephen's son, to invade Normandy; but Henry drove their united forces out of that country, and then returned to assist his partisans, whom the king was then besieging upon the Thames. Here for two days, divided only by the river, the two armies lay camped opposite to one another, on the eve, as it seemed, of another desperate fight, when Stephen and young Plantagenet went down, each to his own bank of the river, and held a conversation across it, in which they arranged a truce. The truce led to a solemn council at Winchester, in which it was agreed that Stephen should retain the crown on condition of declaring Henry his successor; that William, another son of the king's, should inherit his father's rightful possessions; and that all the crown lands which Stephen had given away should be recalled, and all the castles he had permitted to be built demolished. Thus terminated the bitter war, which

STEPHEN.

had now lasted fifteen years, and had again laid England waste. In the next year Stephen died, after a troubled reign of nineteen years.

Although Stephen was a humane and moderate man, with many excellent qualities, the people of England suffered more in these dread nineteen years than at any former period of their suffering history. In the division of the nobility between the two rival claimants of the crown, and in the growth of what is called the Feudal System (which made the peasants the born vassals and mere slaves of the barons), every noble had his strong castle, where he reigned, the cruel king of all the neighboring people. Accordingly, he perpetrated whatever cruelties he chose; and never were worse cruelties committed upon earth than in wretched England in those nineteen years.

In England there was no corn, no meat, no cheese, no butter; there were no tilled lands, no harvests. Ashes of burnt towns and dreary wastes were all that the traveller would see, and from sunrise until night he would not come upon a home.

The clergy suffered heavily, too, from pillage; but many of them had castles of their own, and fought in helmet and armor like the barons, and drew lots with other fighting men for their share of booty. The pope, on Stephen's resisting his ambition, laid England under an interdict, which means that he allowed no service to be performed in the churches, no couples to be married, no bells to be rung, no dead bodies to be buried.

CHAPTER XI.

HENRY II.

HENRY PLANTAGENET, when twenty-one years old, quietly succeeded to the throne of England. Six weeks after Stephen's death he and his queen, Eleanor, were crowned in that city, into which they rode on horseback in great state, amid much rejoicing, clashing of music and strewing of flowers.

The reign of King Henry II. began well. The king had great possessions, and (what with his own rights, and what with those of his wife) was lord of one-third part of France. He was a young man of vigor, ability and resolution, and applied himself to remove some of the evils which had arisen in the last unhappy reign. He revoked all the grants of land made on either side during the late struggles; he obliged numbers of disorderly soldiers to depart from England; he reclaimed all the castles belonging to the crown; and he forced the wicked nobles to pull down 1100 of their own castles, in which dismal cruelties had been inflicted on the people. The king's brother, Geoffrey, rose against him in France. He repaired to that country, where, after he had subdued and made a friendly arrangement with his brother, his ambition to increase his possessions involved him in a war with the French king. However, the war came to nothing, and the pope made the two kings friends again.

Now, the clergy in the troubles of the last reign had gone on very ill indeed. There were all kinds of criminals among them—murderers, thieves, and vagabonds; and the worst of the matter was, that the good priests

would not give up the bad priests to justice when they committed crimes, but persisted in sheltering and defending them. The king, well knowing that there could be no peace while such things lasted, resolved to reduce the power of the clergy, and, when he had reigned seven years, found (as he considered) a good opportunity for doing so in the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury. "I will have for the new archbishop," thought the king, "a friend in whom I can trust, who will help me to humble these rebellious priests, and have them dealt with when they do wrong as other men who do wrong are dealt with."

Thomas à Becket was the son of a Saxon peasant. The Archbishop of Canterbury took him into his service, caused him to take deacon's orders, made him archdeacon of his Church, and employed him in various negotiations with the Holy See. The king favored him, and he was raised to the office of Chancellor of England. He gave him the wardenship of the Tower, and placed in his hands the care and education of the heir to the throne. These appointments yielded large revenues, which were spent by Becket in the greatest luxury and magnificence. The chancellor went on an embassy to Paris, and was attended by many barons and lords and a large body of knights and attendants. His passage through France resembled a triumphal procession, and caused the people to ask, with wonder, what manner of man the King of England must be when his chancellor travelled in such magnificence.

During the period of his chancellorship his influence with the king was used in promoting reforms and instituting measures which were calculated to promote the welfare of the people. Although a churchman, he did not hesitate to attack the extravagant pretensions of the bishops.

"I will make," thought Henry, "this chancellor of mine, Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. Being devoted to me, he will help correct the Church. He once publicly

HENRY II.

told some bishops that men of the Church were equally bound to me with men of the sword. Becket is the man to help me in my great design." So he was made archbishop accordingly.

Now, Becket was proud and loved to be famous. He was already famous for the pomp of his life; he longed to have his name celebrated for something else. Nothing, he knew, would render him so famous as the setting of his power and ability against the power and ability of the king.

In all his sumptuous life he had never yet been in a position to disappoint the king. He could take up that proud stand now as head of the Church, and he determined that it should be written in history either that he subdued the king or that the king subdued him.

Becket knew better than anyone in England what the king expected of him. But he and the king came to war on Church matters; he thought his life was in danger and he fled. The strife between them kept up for six years, when Henry wanted his son for his *Viceroy* in England. No one but the archbishop, Becket claimed, had the right to crown the king, but Henry got the Bishop of York to do it. This brought on him the anger of the pope and of Louis VII. of France, who took up Becket's cause. The king gave in at last, and Becket came back, and the people were glad, for they looked on him as a good and wise man who had not been dealt right with. He was firm, and got a bill from the pope which took away the office from the Bishop of York.

Henry flew into one of his fits of rage and said, "What cowards have I brought up in my court! No one will deliver me from this low-born priest!" Four of his knights took him at his word and slew Becket in his own church, in which he sought safety. Henry was horror-stricken, and cleared himself with the pope and made oath that he had no share in the murder.

THE MURDER OF BECKET. (77)

Henry's life was clouded with strife with his sons, among whom he wished to divide his lands. Henry, the young king, was to have England, Normandy and Anjou. Richard got his mother's lands in Aquitaine and Poitou. Geoffrey got the Duchy of Brittany by his marriage with its heir, Constance. This left John out in the cold, and the king asked his sons to give him some of their castles and lands. Young Henry refused, and those who wished ill to the king stirred up strife, and the three elder sons rose up against their father. Round them flocked Louis of France and the King of Scotland and all the barons who felt sore.

Henry looked on this as caused by the Divine wrath at the murder of Becket; so he let himself be scourged before the saint's tomb, as Becket was styled.

The king acted quickly, and soon put down the revolt. No one met with a hard fate but the King of Scotland, who had to admit English troops in the castles of the Lowlands. Henry's two elder sons were soon once more at war with him, but in 1183 the young king died, begging his father to forgive him. Geoffrey was pardoned, but did not get on well, and died in 1186. Richard, in 1188, sought the help of Philip of France and invaded his father's foreign lands. Henry, who was now old and in poor health, bowed to the demands of his foes. He asked for a list of the barons who had joined Richard, and the first name he heard was that of his son John. He turned his face to the wall and cried, "Now let all things go what way they may; I care no more for myself nor for the world."

In the early part of his reign Henry got word from Pope Hadrian IV. (the only Englishman that was ever made pope) that he might take Ireland. He sent over some troops with Dermond, a king who had fled from Ireland, and Richard of Clare, called "Strongbow." They took the land. Dermond died, and Strongbow, who had

wed his daughter, claimed the chief rule, but he was afraid of Henry and thought it best to give up Dublin and to hold his Irish lands as a vassal of the English crown. Henry went to Ireland in 1171, and was regarded as king and ruler.

Henry told his attendants to take him to the French town of Chinon—a town he had been fond of during many years. But he was fond of no place now ; it was too true that he could care for nothing more upon this earth. He wildly cursed the hour when he was born, and cursed the children whom he left behind him and expired, after governing England well for nearly thirty-five years.

As, a century before, the followers of the court had abandoned The Conqueror in the hour of his death, so they now abandoned his descendant. The very body was stripped, in the plunder of the royal chamber, and it was not easy to find the means of carrying it for burial to the abbey-church of Fontevraud.

Richard was said to have the heart of a lion. It would have been far better had he possessed the heart of a man. His heart, whatever it was, had cause to beat remorsefully within his breast when he looked on his dead father's uncovered face. His heart had been a black and perjured heart in all its dealings with the deceased king, and more deficient in a single touch of tenderness than any wild beast's in the forest.

CHAPTER XII.

RICHARD I.

RICHARD OF THE LION-HEART succeeded to the throne.

He was a tall, stout man, ruddy and brown-haired, liked fine things and show in dress. He was fond of war,

and his great strength and pluck fitted him to win. He was fierce and rash, and as a Crusader he was full of zeal for the faith. He cared nothing for the English, but wanted the gold the land brought to him, and in his whole reign he was but twice in the country, and at each time but for a short while.

To raise the money that brought him and his bands to the East he sold honors, offices, church lands, and to the King of Scots release from all that Henry II. had laid on him. "I would sell London if I could find a buyer," he said.

He, with Philip of France, set out for the Holy Land, but ere they got there their love and good-will had cooled. These rows ruined the Crusade. Philip went home and tried to get hold of Richard's lands. Other leaders found fault with Richard's harsh ways, and he with their lack of zeal. He was forced to make a truce with Saladin, the Sultan of Egypt and Syria. His ill-luck had been a great grief to him. When he got a sight of the Holy Land he covered his face with his hand and begged God not to let him see it, since he could not take it. The Crusade checked the rule of the great Saladin, and thus was not quite a failure.

In this reign England was ruled by the king's justiciars. Of these, William, of Longchamp, was chancellor. He was not liked by the nobles, and he hated the English, whose speech he could not learn. He was removed, and the king's brother John was made regent and heir to the crown.

Richard set out for home, but was made captive in Austria, and John swore he was dead and laid claim to the crown.

The king in his haste to get home left his fleet and came on foot. In Austria he was seized by Leopold, the duke of that land, with whom he had quarrelled in the times of the Crusade. The duke sold him to Henry VI., who,

RICHARD I.

to do Philip of France a good turn, kept him loaded with chains. Henry VI. gave him up for a ransom that was so large that to raise it each Englishman gave up a fourth of his goods, and the Church plate and jewels were taken to make up the sum. When he was freed Philip wrote to John, "Take care of yourself, for the devil is let loose." Richard took away the lands and castles from John, but gave him back the lands, though he would not trust him with the castles.

The rest of Richard's life was spent in war with Philip. In April, 1199, the king died in a battle he had with one of his barons, who had found a large lot of gold on some of his lands. The king called for this gold, but the baron would give up but the half of it. So the king went to war, stormed and took the castle, and ordered all the troops to be hanged. He was shot in the back by a young archer, whom he forgavė on his death-bed, but who was killed by his troops after his death. He was wed, but left no heirs.

CHAPTER XIII.

KING JOHN.

At thirty-two years of age John became King of England. His nephew, Arthur, had the best claim to the throne, but John seized the treasure and got himself crowned at Westminster. I doubt whether the crown could possibly have been put upon the head of a meaner coward or a more detestable villain if England had been searched from end to end to find him out.

The French king, Philip, refused to acknowledge the right of John to the throne, and declared in favor of Arthur. So John and the French king went to war about Arthur.

KING JOHN.

In a battle Arthur was thrown into John's hands, and he wanted Hubert, of Burg, to blind the boy. Hubert would not put his eyes out, and it is said John stabbed him with his own hands. Philip ordered John to clear himself of this stain before the French Peers, and when he did not he was said to have forfeited his fiefs. So Philip took Normandy and the lands around it. To England these losses proved a gain. The kings became Englishmen, and not mere French princes who held England.

John got into a row with Pope Innocent II. on the right of the monks to elect the archbishop. John claimed that the bishops had a voice in the matter. The pope sided with the monks, and had them elect Stephen Langston, an Englishman who then lived in Rome, and the first scholar of his day. John named some one else for the place, and refused to receive Langston. The pope then laid the land under an interdict.

John defied the pope and took away the lands from the priests who observed the interdict. Then the pope excommunicated him and declared him deposed from his throne, and called on Philip of France and all Christian nobles and knights to join in a holy war against him. Then John's pluck failed him. His harsh laws had set high and low against him, and he felt he could not depend on his subjects.

Peter, a hermit, had said that when the next Ascension day had passed John would have ceased to reign. John grew afraid, brought in Stephen, and by a charter granted to the pope the lands of England and Ireland, to be held by John and his heirs by a yearly tribute, and swore fealty to Innocent. In a week the feast of the Ascension had passed, and John had the hermit hanged for a false prophet. The people said Peter had spoken true—John was no longer a king, but a vassal.

The barons now made up their minds to put a check on John's harsh rule. They brought out the old charter of

Henry I., which was heard with great joy by all present, who saw in it a law for the good things they desired. In the next year the barons took an oath on the altar to withdraw their aid and help to John if he still held out and refused their demands. John sent out for aid, but the news came back that no man would help him against the charter. At Easter the barons came once more to press their claims. "Why don't you ask for my kingdom?" cried John, in a burst of rage. He swore he would not grant them liberties that would make him a slave, but the whole land rose when he refused. Nursing wrath in his heart, the tyrant bowed to the need and called the barons to a talk at Runnymede.

An isle in the Thames had been chosen as the place to meet. The king camped on one side and the barons took the other side. The talk was a mere cloak to cover John's plans of unconditional surrender. The Great Charter was discussed, agreed to and signed in a single day.

One copy of it can still be seen in the British Museum, injured by age and fire, but with the seal still hanging from the brown, shrivelled parchment. Here you can see with your own eyes, and touch with your own hands, the Great Charter to which from age to age patriots have looked back as the basis of English liberty.

The worst of the bad acts were at once swept away, the hostages restored to their homes, and the people who did not belong to the land were sent off. But it was hard to find means to hold in check a king whom no man could trust.

John went for aid to the pope, who told the barons the charter was of no effect. He then hired troops and fell on the barons. He starved them out in some places, and ravaged the midland towns. This drove the barons to seek aid from France, and they said they would make Philip's son, Louis, their king. Louis landed at Kent with a large force, and the hired French troops of John

left him at once. Louis entered London and the city bowed to his yoke. John marched to the North; in crossing the Wash his baggage and treasure were washed away. A fever now seized him, and he entered Newark only to die, leaving behind him an evil name.

CHAPTER XIV.

HENRY III.

THE dead usurper's eldest boy, Henry, was taken to the city of Gloucester, and there crowned when he was only ten years old. As the crown itself had been lost with the king's treasure, they put a circle of plain gold upon his head instead. "We have been the enemies of this child's father," said Pembroke, a good and true gentleman, to the few lords who were present, "and he merited our ill-will; but the child himself is innocent, and his youth demands our friendship and protection." Those lords felt tenderly towards the little boy, and they bowed their heads and said, "Long live King Henry III!"

Next, a council met at Bristol, revised Magna Charta, and made Lord Pembroke Regent or Protector of England, as the king was too young to reign alone. The next thing to be done was to get rid of Prince Louis of France, and to win over those English barons who were still ranged under his banner.

The story of Henry's reign is for a long time one of strife against foreign sway. The horde who were in John's service still had a deal to say and do in the land, till they were got rid of by Hubert of Burg, who, when the Earl of Pembroke died, came to the front and ruled the land for Henry till he lost the king's good-will. Then, when twenty-nine years old, Henry took to wife Eleanor of Pro-

HENRY III.

vence. She was not liked, for she gave freely to her kin, who looked on England as a mine of wealth out of which they were glad to get as much as they could.

The king had no bad faults, but he was weak and vain, and liked to be seen giving gifts, and so he was always poor and greedy for money. When his first son, Edward, was born he sought gifts from all who were near him. The rich men of London spoke hard of the tax laid upon them. They were no friends of the court, and their hatred often broke out. The barons forced Henry to form a Parliament of twenty-four men, half to be named by him and half to be fixed on by them. But this new rule did not work long. They fought amongst themselves, and Henry then grabbed the chance to try to get back his own rule.

This ended in a war between Henry and the barons, who were led by Simon of Montfort, a Frenchman, who had obtained the Earldom of Leicester, on which his people held a claim, had wed the king's sister Eleanor, and who had grown to be an out-and-out Englishman. He was a brave man, rash at times, but skilled in war and rule. The king, who made him all that he was, soon fell out with him, and Simon stood forth as the head of the band that looked for a change. The priests thought well of him, and so did the people of the towns, and he was well liked in London, where the king and his court was disliked. When the war at last broke out the queen tried to pass down from the Tower to Windsor. The Londoners pelted her with mud and tried to sink her boat, and forced her to go back. The fight at Lewes, in 1264, put an end for a time to the war. Edward, the king's son, charged on the Londoner's with dash and pluck and routed them. He chased them for miles, and while he was killing them his own friends were defeated by Simon. King Henry fought well, but was forced to give in, and though treated with respect, he was in fact a captive and Simon was the real ruler.

The great act of Simon, while he ruled, was to summon a Parliament in Henry's name, to which men from the towns were called. The great barons, out of whom, in these days, the House of Lords, or Peers, was formed, came,

DEATH OF HENRY III.

as they still do, in person, and as the small freeholders were too many to do the same, a few of their number came to act for them—so many knights from each county. Simon brought the towns in by having each city and borough send two of its citizens. Simon's was not what we would call a full and free Parliament. The number

of earls and barons was small, only those being called who were friends of his. On the other hand, there was a large body of clergy, as amongst this class his friends were many.

Simon "The Righteous," as he was called, did not hold his sway long. His sons brought him into trouble. Edward escaped, and, with the Earl of Gloucester, whipped Simon's son at Kenilworth. They then marched against the elder Simon at Eversham, who gave up the fight, saying, "Now, let us commend our souls to God, for our bodies are theirs." He fought to the end, and was killed by a blow from behind. His corpse was mangled, but some parts of it were buried by the monks of Eversham, and the clergy and people looked on him as a martyr. The fight brought Henry back to power.

The land at peace, Edward and Edmund set out on what proved to be the last Crusade, and while they were gone King Henry died. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, which he had rebuilt, and ere his grave was closed the Earl of Gloucester placed his hand on the corpse and swore fealty to the absent Edward, who was at once declared king.

CHAPTER XV.

EDWARD I.

EDWARD, the first English prince after the Norman conquest, who was an Englishman at heart, was strong and tall, a good horseman, and fond of the hunt. He could hold his own in a hand-to-hand fight, and never grudged to take his share of the hardships of war. In a fight in Wales, when he and his men ran short of food, he refused to have some wine kept for his own use. "In times of

need all things ought to be shared," he said. "I, who am the cause of your being in this strait, will fare the same as you all." He was a good soldier. He ruled the realm well and wisely. He loved to rule, and was loath to give it up, but he knew when to yield; his chief fault was that

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF EDWARD I.

he would strain his legal rights, and keep to the letter of the law rather than to its spirit.

When Edward came to the throne the Prince of Wales was called on to do homage. This he evaded for a long time, but he was at length looked on as a rebel, and brought by force of arms to yield. For some time there was peace, but the prince and his people still hoped to

win their freedom. The prince lost his life in a fight, and his brother, David, was put to death as a traitor.

When the king's son Edward was sixteen years old he was created Prince of Wales, a name since that time usually given to the king's first son.

The Scots included all the people north of the Tweed and Solway, and had no king, but there was a crowd of men who claimed it. Of these, the best known are John Baliol and Robert Bruce, both of Norman blood, who held lands in England and Scotland, and rested their claims on their descent from nieces of William the Lion. Edward was called on to say who should be king, and he settled on Baliol, but made him acknowledge him as head king. There was a fight between France and England, and the Scots sided with France. In this they were worsted, and Baliol was forced to give up the crown to Edward, who brought away the Scotch crown jewels and with them a relic whose loss was deeply felt. At Scone there was a piece of rock on which the Scotch king stood when he was crowned. It was said where that stone was the Scotch kings should reign. Edward placed it on a throne in Westminster Abbey, where the stone and chair still are seen, and on them all the Kings of England have since been crowned.

Edward did not treat the Scotch harshly, but Southern rule was hated by them. Wallace, a chief of outlaws, headed a new rising and whipped the English at Stirling. He then ravaged Northumberland and Cumberland, and was made ruler of Scotland. His fall was as rapid as his rise. Edward routed his foes at Talkirk, and Wallace sank once more to his outlaw's life, Edward called on him to bow to the king's mercy. This he disdained to do. He was captured, brought to London, and hanged at Tyburn. He gained by his death the martyr's crown. What he failed to do was brought about by Robert Bruce, who had claimed the throne. Calling the Scots around him, he

EDWARD I.

had himself crowned at Scone. Edward was now in poor health and had to move slowly. He sent his son Edward to fight the Scots, and he burned and wasted the whole land, and the king had to check him for his cruel deeds. Bruce was hunted from place to place, but he gained some few small fights. Edward marched from Carlisle as soon as his health let him, but he died in sight of Scotland.

The Jews were hated by the people, and Edward ordered them all out of the kingdom on pain of death. They were let take with them their money and goods. Harsh as was this order, it is but fair to Edward to say that he cut off a great source of revenue in thus acting up to the wishes of his people.

Edward had four sons by Eleanor, his first wife. All but the youngest, Edward, died in their youth. The king's next wife, Margaret, sister of Philip IV. of France, had two sons—Thomas, Earl of Norfolk, and Edward, Earl of Kent.

CHAPTER XVI.

EDWARD II.

King Edward II., the first Prince of Wales, was twenty-three years old when his father died. The young king had a friend, called Piers, who had been chosen for him in his youth by his father—who had cause to rue his choice. Piers was sent off before the king died, and the young Edward was told not to bring him back, and to go on with the war with the Scots. But he paid no heed to these wishes. He wed Isabel, the daughter of Philip IV. of France. Piers was brought back, and the Scotch war dragged. The bishops, earls and barons took the rule from the king for a year and Piers was cleared off again. He came back to the king and was captured in a fight, and his head was cut off.

EDWARD II.

While Edward was at strife with his barons Scotland was lost—all the forts there fell into the hands of Bruce. Edward, with a large force, set out to take Stirling Castle. The fight took place at Bannockburn, where Bruce and his small force cut up the English and sent them fleeing over the plain. Edward fled and all his wealth fell into the hands of the Scots, who had now gained their freedom, though it was long before the English would treat Bruce as king.

Edward Bruce, a brother of Robert, went to Ireland with a force. He gained some small fights and was crowned king. Two years later he fell in a fight. Edward was now at strife for a long time with his people. Thomas was taken in a fight and his head cut off in his own castle.

Charles IV. of France got up a row with Edward, who sent his wife and son over to France, thinking that she could bring her brother to make terms for him. She remained in France for a long time, and when she came back she had with her a band of troops. In the fights that followed Edward was captured and forced to give up the crown to his son. He yielded with tears, and was confined in Kenilworth Castle.

One night dreadful screams were heard by the startled people, ringing through the thick walls of the castle, and they said, "May Heaven be merciful to the king, for those cries forebode that no good is being done to him in his dismal prison!" Next morning he was dead—not bruised or stabbed, or marked upon the body, but much distorted in the face; and it was whispered afterwards that he had been burnt to death with a red-hot iron. Mortimer, the queen's lover, said he ordered the deed done.

If you ever go near Gloucester, and see the centre tower of its beautiful cathedral, you may remember that the wretched Edward II. was buried in the old abbey of that ancient city when forty-three years old, after being for nineteen years and a half a perfectly incapable king.

CHAPTER XVII.

EDWARD III.

As the new king was only fourteen years old, guardians were made to rule the land, but the queen and Mortimer managed to get all the power in their own hands. They had wars with the Scots but were whipped in all of them, and when they made a peace the English scorned them. By this time Edward was eighteen years old and his own master. He took Mortimer a captive and had him condemned, with no hearing, and his head was cut off. Isabel passed the rest of her life in ward at Castle Rising.

On the death of Charles IV. of France Edward put in a claim to the throne, in right of his mother. This claim was not allowed by the French, who claimed that women by the "Salic law" were shut out from the throne. Philip, the real king of France, helped the Scots in their fights with England, and Edward brought up his old claim once more, and this brought on "The Hundred Years' War." They were not, of course, fighting all this time, but there was no settled peace for all that time. Edward's first great fight was one at sea. There were six years more of war and truce, when he gained the great battle at Crecy, August 26, 1346. The French had more troops than the English, but they were ill-led. Philip, wild with rage and grief, got off to Amiens. It is said that Edward used cannon in this battle, with good effect.

Edward blockaded by sea and land the town of Calais, and the troops there were starved into surrender. He wanted to kill all of them, but his queen begged their lives and they were spared. He placed a colony of Eng-

EDWARD III.

lish in the town and they remained there for two hundred years. A truce was fixed up by Pope Clement VI. While Edward was in France the Scots rose up and invaded England but were whipped, and their king, David Bruce, was captured.

Edward now stood at the height of his fame. The English had learned to think they could beat the French at any time. The spoils of France were to be seen in every house.

In 1348 and 1349 a great plague, called the "black death" swept through Europe, and killed more than half of the people in England. Men to till the soil were scarce, and wages were high. The king and his Parliament tried to force men to work for their old hire, and did not let them move out of their own place.

The French war came again, and the chief work was done by young Edward, known as the "Black Prince" from the color of the armor he wore at Crecy. The French were whipped all around by the English, who plundered the French towns and stole spoil by the load.

John the Good, the King of France, was taken captive to London. He paid three million gold crowns for his ransom, and Edward gave up his claim to the throne of France, but kept Poitou, Aquitaine and Calais.

The Black Prince took the part of Dom Pedro, who had been cast out from Castile, and won back his lands and rule for him. Pedro broke his word to pay Edward for his expenses, and he came back with his health ruined, his temper spoiled and his bank drained out. To raise gold he put on a hearth tax, and the Aquitaine's turned to Charles V., the French king, and war broke out once more. The prince rallied his strength, but his last act—the killing of all the townspeople in Limoges—has left a stain on his good name. He came back to England, and, wearied out, he sued for a truce.

The king's third son, John, Duke of Lancaster, called,

THE BLACK PRINCE AND KING JOHN.

from his birthplace, John of Ghent, or Gaunt, now took the lead at home. Young Edward was dying and the elder Edward was old and feeble. Gaunt called bad men around him, and was at last removed from his trust by the Parliament, which was helped by the Black Prince, and which gained the name of "the good."

DEATH OF EDWARD III.

On June 8, 1376, the Black Prince died, and great was the grief of the land for him who had won them fame abroad and strove with his last strength to save them from bad laws at home. He was buried at Canterbury Cathedral, where his helmet, shield, gauntlets, and his great-coat with the arms of England and France on it, still hang above his tomb. John of Gaunt now came back and had things his own way.

In his last moments Edward was fórsaken by all his friends and servants. One priest came to his bedside and gave him a cross. He kissed it, and died. In the after years his fame stood high. In his own days, though he was thought well of as a war king, the people at large had no great love for him. His sons were Edward, Prince of Wales; Lionel, Duke of Clarence; John, Duke of Lancaster; Edward, Duke of York; and Thomas, Duke of Gloucester. This title of duke, the highest in the peerage, was first made by Edward III. He founded the Order of the Knights of the Garter, and rebuilt a great part of Windsor Castle.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RICHARD II.

RICHARD, son of the Black Prince, was made king at the age of eleven. His reign was one of trouble. When the "black death" came and carried off the men who tilled the soil, a law was passed which fixed their wages at a rate the men refused to take. Riots were common. Men like Wat Tyler started up to lead the mobs. One hundred thousand of them marched from Kent to London, where they broke into the prisons and set free the captives. They burned John of Gaunt's palace, and the Temple, with all its books, and killed all the Flemish workmen they could find. But no one took spoils. "We will not be thieves," they said, as they flung Lancaster's jewels into the Thames. Wat Tyler, their chief, was stabbed while talking with Richard, who then rode to the front of the mob and said he would be their leader. He got them to give way by his promise to grant their demands.

Richard was noted for his good looks. But he was able,

and could, when he wanted to, act with quickness and pluck. He was fond of shows, and his temper was bad at times. In 1388 the party against the king was headed by Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, who got the upper-hand, when death or flight was meted out to all of Richard's friends. The Parliament which condemned them was known as "the merciless." The next year Richard, with sudden pluck, took the reins in his own hands, and for eight years he ruled well, though he did not forgive those who took part in the acts of 1388. His first wife died, and two years later he wed a child of eight years—Isabel, daughter of Charles VI. of France.

This step was not liked, as the English had no wish to be friendly with France, and it was strongly fought by Gloucester, who was seized the next year and hurried off to Calais, where he soon died—murdered, it was thought. Richard had got the best of all his foes, and had a Parliament devoted to him, so that there was no check on him.

Of the nobles who had sided against him only two were left, and they had come to the king's side and were restored to favor. These were Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and Henry, Duke of Hereford, sons of John of Gaunt.

Hereford said Norfolk had slandered the king. Norfolk denied the charge, and they were to fight it out, when the king stopped the fight and sent Hereford off for ten years and Norfolk for life. John of Gaunt lived but a short while after his sons were sent off, and his lands, which should have passed to Hereford, were taken by Richard.

Richard went over to Ireland and Hereford came back to England. He was joined by the heads of all the great houses in the North. His troops swelled to sixty thousand men, and Edward, Duke of York, who acted as regent, in place of fighting Hereford ended by taking up his cause.

Richard in Ireland heard no news of his landing for two weeks, and then he could not make up his mind what to do. At last he landed in Wales, but his troops fell off

RICHARD II.

from him. He was induced to leave his place of refuge, and was brought captive to Hereford, who took him to London, where he gave up the crown.

On this, Henry of Lancaster claimed the crown, as being the heir of Henry III., and he was led to the throne on which he was placed amid the shouts of the people who filled Westminster.

CHAPTER XIX.

HENRY IV.

HENRY was in fact an elected king, but claimed a vested right as a descendant of Henry III.

By the Act of the Lords Richard was consigned to a secret cell for life, and none knew where he was. Some nobles took up arms in his favor. They were soon crushed, and Richad's dead body was brought to London, where it was shown in St. Paul's and then buried at Langley. Some said he had been killed; some said starved. Some declared this was not Richard's body, and that he was alive in Scotland.

Henry had not been long on the throne when the Welsh rose in arms. They were led by Glendower, who spread terror amongst the English. The Welsh in England flocked to join this chief, against whom Henry led his troops in vain. Glendower would hie to his hills, and let his foes fight the wind, and wet, and the dangers of a wild and rugged land.

Henry's great friends were the Percys—the Earl of Northumberland, his brother Thomas, Earl of Worcester, and his son, Sir Henry, who had spent his life in fights with the Scots, by whom he was called "Harry Hotspur," be-

DEATH OF WATT TYLER.

cause he was always in the saddle, and his spear was never cold. He and his father routed the Scotch at Homildon Hill.

But the Percys grumbled at the king, who would not pay them what they had spent in their wars with the Scotch. He would not permit Mortimer to be bought off from Glendower, who held him a captive. Mortimer was Hotspur's brother-in-law, and he was uncle to the young Earl of March, and Henry was glad to have him out of the way. Being thus offended, Mortimer and the Percys planned with their old foe, Douglas, to join Glendower in a fight to win the crown for Richard, if alive, or else for the Earl of March.

Henry did not suspect the Percys, and he was on his way to join them in a fight with the Scots when he learned they were in arms for King Richard and were marching for Wales. He hurried West, and fought a fierce and bloody fight with them, where Hotspur fell, pierced by a shaft in the brain, and his band of troops fled. Worcester was taken, and paid for his revolt with his life. Northumberland, who was not there, swore his son acted against his orders, and so escaped. He was killed in a third revolt some years after. The power of Glendower, who at times got aid from France, was at last broken by the Prince of Wales, but he never gave up or bowed to England's yoke.

The king's health sank and he became subject to epileptic fits, and his spirits sank every day. When praying in Westminster Abbey he was seized with a fit and carried into the abbot's chamber, where he died. It had been foretold that he would die at Jerusalem, which certainly is not, and never was, Westminster. But as the abbot's room had long been called the Jerusalem Chamber, people said it was all the same thing, and were quite satisfied with the prediction.

The king died in the forty-seventh year of his age and the

HENRY IV.

fourteenth of his reign. He was buried in Canterbury Cathedral. He had been twice married, and had by his first wife a family of four sons and two daughters. Considering his duplicity before he came to the throne, his unjust seizure of it, and, above all, his making that monstrous law for the burning of what the priests called heretics, he was a reasonably good king, as kings went.

CHAPTER XX.

HENRY V.

The Prince of Wales began his reign like a generous and honest man. He set the young Earl of March free; he restored their estates and their honors to the Percy family, who had lost them by their rebellion against his father; he ordered Richard to be buried among the kings of England; and he dismissed all his wild companions, with assurances that they should not want if they were steady, faithful and true.

At this time the Lollards grew great in force and power, and their preachers spread through the land. Lord Cobham was at their head. He was an old friend of Henry's, who wished him to give up this faith. But good-will nor threats had any effect on Cobham. He was tried in the Bishop's court and declared a heretic, and was sent to the Tower. He escaped from there, and then grew to be a terror to the throne, which feared a Lollard rising with such a head—for Cobham was a tried soldier. He lay hid for a few years, but was at length caught and put to death as a traitor and a heretic. He was hung up in an iron chain and burned by a fire kindled below.

There had been for some years a truce, and some wars

HENRY V.

with France, but never a peace. Charles VI. of France was now out of his mind, and his land was torn by bands who each wished to get at the head of the kingdom. Henry now resolved to cross over and claim "his inheritance." When he first sent his troops to France the two sides came together as one and pushed the English back. Henry sailed for the Norman coast, and in his first fight took Harfleur. Sickness thinned his ranks, and he had but a mere handful of troops when he marched on Calais. Here, at Agincourt, he found sixty thousand French troops lined up to meet him. The king's pluck rose with his peril. One of his knights wished that the stout war men then in England were with them. Henry said, "I would not have a man more. If God lets us win, it will be plain that we owe it to His grace. If not, the fewer we are the less loss to England." Sick and starved as were his men, they shared the king's view. When the chill, rainy night passed, his archers bared their arms and breasts to give fair play to "the crooked stick and the gray-goose wing;" but for which, as the rhyme rang, "England were but a fling," and with a great shout they sprang into the fight. The French were crowded in a space so small that they had scarce room to strike, and on ground so soft from the rains that the horses could hardly flounder through the mire. The fight was fierce and the loss great, and the English were forced back, but Henry and his men-of-arms around him flung themselves on the French lines. Henry was felled by a blow from a French mace, and the crown on his helmet was cleft by the sword of the Duke of Alençon; but he stuck to it, and in the end the French were routed and forced to flight. Eleven thousand French lay dead on the field, and more than one hundred princes and great lords were among the slain.

The English troops were too used up to do more. They made their way to Calais and came back to England with their captives, where they made a great show in London.

In 1417 Henry went once more to take Normandy. Fort after fort gave in. Rouen, at this time the largest and greatest town in France, held out for six months, but was at last starved out. Twelve thousand people from the towns who had fled to Rouen were forced out of the walls and left to die in the cold. They agreed to fire the city and fling themselves in a mass on the English lines, and Henry, who feared he would lose the prize, at last made terms. The man who headed the French there, and who for so long held him at bay, he killed in cold blood. Henry built a castle here, and here he held his court. A few more fights and all Normandy was his. The cost of the war troubled the people at home, so Henry made peace with the French crown.

Just at this time the Duke of Burgundy was stabbed in the sight of the Dauphin, with whom he had been called for a talk. His friends, with Duke Philip at their head, flung themselves into Henry's hands in their wild thirst for revenge. The mad king, Charles, with his queen and daughters, were in Philip's hands, and in his vow to keep the Dauphin from the throne the duke stooped to buy English aid, and gave Katherine, the eldest of the French princesses, to Henry to wed, and conferred the regency on him, and swore to see that he was made king on the death of Charles.

Henry died August 31, 1422. His funeral march from Rouen to Calais, and from Dover to London and Westminster, was more costly and showy than that of any king before him. He left one son, a child of nine months old, who bore his name. Katherine made a bad match with Owen Tudor, and in the course of time their heirs—the Tudor line of kings—came to sit on the English throne.

CHAPTER XXI.

HENRY VI.

It had been the wish of the late king that while his infant son, King Henry VI., was under age, the Duke of Gloucester should be appointed regent. The English Parliament, however, preferred to appoint a council of regency, with the Duke of Bedford at its head, to be represented, in his absence only, by the Duke of Gloucester. The Parliament would seem to have been wise in this, for Gloucester soon showed himself to be ambitious and troublesome, and in the gratification of his own personal schemes gave offence to the Duke of Burgundy, which was with difficulty adjusted.

As that duke declined the regency of France, it was bestowed by the poor French king upon the Duke of Bedford. But the French king dying within two months, the dauphin instantly asserted his claim to the French throne, and was actually crowned under the title of Charles VII. The Duke of Bedford, to be a match for him, entered into a friendly league with the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, and gave them his two sisters in marriage. War with France was immediately renewed, and the perpetual peace came to an untimely end.

In 1428 the English laid siege to Orleans, and its fall, which would lay the Dauphin's land free to them, seemed at hand, when France was saved as if by a miracle. From the town of Domremy came a girl of sixteen years—Jeanne d'Arc, or, as she is called in English, Joan of Arc—who claimed she had been sent by God to bring Charles to Rheims and crown him king. Rheims, where the French

HENRY VI.

kings had been crowned, was then in English hands, with more than ten thousand troops there. Joan led a force to Orleans, and with but a few men reached the city. Great crowds of troops followed her march to Rheims, where Charles was crowned, when Joan said, "O king! God's will is done!" and she asked leave to go home.

She was kept for some time at the French court, while the towns in the north of France opened their gates to the new-made king. In a new fight Charles was hurled back from the walls of Paris, and fell back behind the Loire. Joan fought with her old pluck, but she seemed to feel that her mission was at an end, and she was captured and sold to the English, who burned her at the stake for a heretic and a witch. She had wakened the heart of France and the English had lost ground. The Duke of Burgundy made peace with France in 1435. In the same year the regent, Bedford, died, and then the land that Henry inherited and won was lost past all chance. To England nothing was left but Calais and the bare name of King of France; and thus ended the hundred years' war.

All this time there was strife among the great men as to who should rule. Humphrey, Henry's uncle, who was protector in Henry's youth, strove with Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, and Cardinal Beaufort saw it was best to make peace, while Humphrey was for keeping up the war. Henry was of weak mind and had no more real rule as a man than he had as a child, and when he wed in 1445, his wife and her chief friend, the Marquis of Suffolk, had the rule. Margaret, Henry's wife, was the daughter of René, King of Sicily, who was related to the French king. Henry decided a long peace, and Suffolk thought he brought this near by the marriage, when it was agreed the English would give up the lands in Anjou and Maine. This the English did not like, but not much was said till Humphrey died in 1447. It was thought he was killed by Suffolk's order.

JOAN OF ARC BEFORE THE KING.

Suffolk was brought to the bar for impeachment, and the king made him leave England for five years. His foes caught him at sea and his head was struck off. This murder brought on a rise of the poor people of Kent. Jack Cade, at the head of twenty thousand of them, called on the king to make some change in the laws. Stafford was sent to put them down, but at Sevenoaks he was whipped and slain. The king's troops then broke up, and Cade, whose forces had swelled to a large crowd, entered London. For three days he ruled the city and struck off the heads of some of the king's chief men. His mob broke into the houses and stole wealth and goods, and the people of London rose and drove them out. Cade was killed in a battle some time later in Sussex.

There now arose a fight for rule between the Dukes of Somerset and York. Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, was liked at court, but the loss of Normandy, which he had ruled for England, was laid to his charge, and the poor people hated him.

Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, as regent in France and lieutenant in Ireland, had shown rare skill, and when the king went mad he was made Protector. The next year the king got well and called back Somerset. Then broke out the fights called the "Wars of the Roses." The badge of the House of Lancaster was a red rose, and that of the House of York a white rose. At first things went ill for York, who fled to Ireland, but he came back and fought at Northampton. In this fight he took Henry, whose wife and son fled to Scotland.

When the next Parliament met, the Duke of York came to the lords with his claim on the crown. The case was settled in this way: Henry was to reign for his life, and Richard of York should succeed him. This threw aside Edward, Henry's only son.

This did not suit some of the nobles and they called for troops in the North. York met them with but a small

force, and was killed in the fight. His son Edmund was stabbed in cold blood by Lord Clifford, who cried, "Thy father slew mine, and so will I thee and all thy kin." The Earl of Salisbury was caught and put to death, and York's head, with a paper crown on it, was set on the walls of the city from which he took his title.

Richard's son, Edward, now Duke of York, came from the West. He routed a band of Red Roses, with Warwick at their head, and marched to London. The people rallied to his call, and cries of "Long live King Edward!" rang round the young leader as he rode through the streets. The lords voted that Henry of Lancaster had forfeited the throne. But the last act now lay not with the lords, but with the sword. Edward was crowned March 4, 1461. Thus ended the reign, though not the life, of Henry, who founded Eton College and King's College at Cambridge. The death of Henry in the Tower, May 4, 1471, crushed the last hopes of the Lancastrians.

CHAPTER XXII.

EDWARD IV.

King Edward IV. began to reign at the age of nineteen. He was false, gay, lewd and revengeful, with some ability, more personal beauty, and no principle. Before he was crowned he had to fight the Lancastrians at Towton, where his victory cost the lives of twenty-six thousand Englishmen. The young king took down the heads of his father and brother from the walls of York, and put up the heads of some of the most famous of the noblemen engaged in the battle on the other side. Then he went to London and was crowned with great splendor.

Queen Margaret received help from Scotland, from the Duke of Brittany, and from the King of France, and took several important English castles. But Warwick soon retook them. She was obliged to take to the sea for safety, and in a storm lost all her treasures, and she and her son

QUEEN MARGARET AND THE ROBBER.

suffered great misfortunes. A story of the time tells that during her wanderings Margaret fell among thieves and was plundered of all she had. While they quarrelled over their booty she escaped, with her son Edward, into the depths of the forest. There she was met by another robber, to whom, in desperation, she presented the boy, saying, "Here, my friend, save the son of thy king." The outlaw's generosity was touched and he led them to

EDWARD IV.

a place of safety. In the end, her soldiers being beaten and dispersed, she went abroad again, and kept quiet for the present.

Henry, after the defeat of his party, was hidden in Lancashire till a faithless old monk told of his hiding-place. He was sent to London, where he was put on a horse, with his legs tied under it, and paraded three times around the pillory. He was then carried off to the Tower.

Edward fell in love with and privately married Elizabeth Woodville, a young widow, very beautiful and very captivating. He made her father Earl Rivers, her son Marquis of Dorset, and gave large estates and much power to the whole family of Woodvilles. This, and the marriage of his sister Margaret to the son of the Duke of Burgundy, offended Warwick and others who had placed him on the throne. To help him put down a rising of sixty thousand men in Yorkshire, Edward sent to Calais for his brother, the Duke of Clarence, and Warwick, whose eldest daughter Clarence had married against the king's wishes. They came and placed the king in the custody of Warwick's brother, the Archbishop of York, but set him at liberty because of a rising of the Lancastrians. The following year Warwick and Clarence raised troops against Edward, were proclaimed traitors, fled to France, and there, through Louis XI., joined Margaret to restore Henry, on condition that Prince Edward should marry Warwick's second daughter Anne, and, if they should die without children, Clarence should have the crown. Four weeks later Warwick arrived, drove Edward out of the kingdom, and took Henry out of the Tower and placed him on the throne.

Edward returned, and by false pretences increased his followers, till he reached Barnett, where, with Clarence, who had all the time been playing false, he gave battle to Warwick, who fell in the fight.

The loss of life was great, for the hatred was strong on both sides. The king-maker was defeated, and the king

THE TOWER OF LONDON.

triumphed. Both the Earl of Warwick and his brother were slain, and their bodies lay in St. Paul's for some days, as a spectacle to the people.

Margaret's spirit was not broken even by this great blow. Within five days she was in arms again, and raised her standard in Bath, whence she set off with her army to try and join Lord Pembroke, who had a force in Wales. But the king, coming up with her outside the town of Tewkesbury, ordered his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, to attack her men. She sustained an entire defeat, and was taken prisoner, together with her son, now eighteen years of age. The conduct of the king to this poor youth was worthy of his cruel character. He ordered him to be led into his tent. "And what," said he, "brought *you* to England?" "I came to England," replied the prisoner, "to recover my father's kingdom, which descended to him as his right, and from him descends to me as mine." The king, drawing off his iron gauntlet, struck him with it in the face; and the Duke of Clarence and some other lords, who were there, drew their noble swords and killed him.

His mother survived him, a prisoner, for five years. After her ransom, by the King of France, she survived for six years more. Within three weeks of this murder Henry died one of those convenient sudden deaths so common in the Tower; in plainer words, he was murdered by the king's order.

Edward called to him the great men of trade in London and asked from each a gift or "benevolence," as it was called, to meet his needs. This act was hated by those who liked the king best, but they dared not refuse. From these gifts grew the forced loans of Woolsey and Charles I.

The House of York now seemed firm on the throne, but it was a divided house. The Duke of Clarence was at strife with his brother, the king, who brought him before the Peers on a charge of treason. He died in the Tower;

EDWARD V.

how, is not known, but it is thought he was drowned in a cask of wine.

Edward died April 9, 1483. He died in the forty-second year of his life and the twenty-third of his reign. He left two sons, Edward, Prince of Wales, and Richard, Duke of York.

CHAPTER XXIII.

EDWARD V.

The late king's eldest son, the Prince of Wales, called Edward, after him, was only thirteen years of age at his father's death. He was at Ludlow Castle, with his uncle, the Earl of Rivers. The prince's brother, the Duke of York, only eleven years of age, was in London with his mother. The boldest, most crafty and most dreaded nobleman in England at that time was their uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and everybody wondered how the two poor boys would fare with such an uncle for a friend or a foe.

Edward V. reigned less than three months, and was not crowned. On his road to London he was met by his uncle Richard, who had come up from the North, and by Stafford, of Buckingham. They cleared off his friends and brought the king to London. The poor boy wept when his friends left him. The king was lodged in the Tower, then a palace, as well as a fort and prison, and Gloucester was made Protector.

All the close friends of the boy-king were tried and beheaded. The young Duke of York was taken from his mother, and thus Gloucester had both the nephews in his hands.

A claim was now made that the marriage of Edward IV. was not right and just, and so the lords and the knights, joined by the chief men of London, asked Gloucester to take the crown on his own head, which he did, and he sat in Westminster Hall as King Richard III. of England.

CHAPTER XXIV.

RICHARD III.

King Richard III. and his queen were crowned with a great deal of show and noise, which the people liked very much, and then the king set forth on a royal progress through his dominions. He was crowned a second time at York, and wherever he went was received with shouts of rejoicing from a good many people of strong lungs, who were paid to strain their throats in crying, "God save King Richard!" The plan was so successful that it has been imitated since by other usurpers, in other progresses, through other dominions.

While on this journey, King Richard stayed a week at Warwick, and from there he sent instructions home for one of the wickedest murders that ever was done—the murder of the two young princes, his nephews, who were shut up in the Tower of London.

To the governor of the Tower Richard sent a letter, ordering him to put the two young princes to death. The governor answered that he could not do so horrible a piece of work. The king called to him one James Tyrrel, his master of the horse, and gave him authority to take command of the Tower. Tyrrel, knowing what was wanted, engaged two ruffians, and went to the Tower, showed his

authority from the king, took command for twenty-four hours, and obtained possession of the keys. When night came he went creeping along the dark stone passages until he came to the door of the room where the two young princes lay fast asleep, clasped in each other's arms. And, while he watched, he sent in those evil demons, who smothered the two princes with the bed and pillows, and carried their bodies down and buried them at the staircase foot. And, when the day came, he gave up the command of the Tower, and restored the keys and hurried away. Years afterwards the bones of two boys, of the age of the young princes, were found in the White Tower beneath the stairs which led to the chapel. The then king, Charles II., brought them to Westminster, where they are buried as Edward V. and Richard, Duke of York.

Buckingham drew around him a band of men high in the State, whose aim it was to bring Henry Tudor, Duke of Richmond, to the throne. Buckingham was deserted by his friends, caught, and his head struck off. The rest fled.

The king's only child, Edward, died, and Richard made his sister's son his heir. The next year Queen Anne died, broke down by sorrow for the loss of her son; or, as his foes claimed, by poison given her by Richard. It was said that he knew no peace of mind; his hand was ever on his dagger, and his rest broken by bad dreams.

Richard had bound himself by oath to wed Elizabeth of York, and so make one of the rival Roses—the great bands of Yorkists and Lancastrians. Richmond, with a large force of Normans, landed in England and was met by Richard, who, in the fierce and bloody fight that was made, fell, pulled down by Lord Stanley, who picked up the crown, all bruised and trampled and stained with blood, and put it upon Richmond's head amid rejoicing cries of "Long live King Henry!"

That night a horse was led up to the church of the Gray

RICHARD III.

Friars at Leicester, across whose back was tied, like some worthless sack, a naked body, brought there for burial. It was the body of the last of the Plantagenet line, King Richard III., usurper and murderer, slain at the battle of Bosworth Field in the thirty-second year of his age, after a reign of two years.

CHAPTER XXV.

HENRY VII.

King Henry VII. did not turn out to be as fine a fellow as the nobility and people hoped, in the first joy of their deliverance from Richard III. He was very cold and calculating, and would do anything for money. He possessed ability; but his chief merit appears to have been that he was not cruel when there was nothing to be got by it.

The new king had promised the nobles that he would marry the Princess Elizabeth. He did not care to wed her, but they were married, and he treated her very unkindly. He did not like the House of York, and before a year had gone by they rose in arms, but were quelled and the leaders fell.

Now rose a new claimant for the throne, styled Richard Plantagenet. He said he was the second son of Edward IV., and had been saved when his brother Edward V. was put to death. Henry said he was Perkin Warbeck.

Troops were got to help his claim, but when he met Henry near Cornwall he left his forces and begged that his life be spared. Henry kept him in the Tower for two years and made him read a confession of his fraud. He, with the Earl of Warwick, who for no crime but his birth

HENRY VII.

had lain in the cell for fourteen years, were put to death on charges of treason.

The king's son, Arthur, at the age of fifteen, was wed to Katherine, daughter of King Ferdinand of Aragon, whose rule covered nearly all of the present Spain. Arthur died in five months, and the young wife was settled on King Henry's second son Henry, the Pope giving his consent to this union with a brother's wife. To make a peace between England and Scotland, the king's daughter, Margaret, was wed to James IV. of Scotland. This proved in the end to be the means of uniting the two kingdoms of Britain.

With the Tudors there came a change in the laws of statecraft. The people would allow the king to be the sole ruler if he would keep order and hold a tight hand on the nobles, who grew so strong that in their own lands they could bend the laws to their will, and no one dared say them nay.

Henry died of the gout in the fifty-third year of his age, after reigning twenty-four years. He was buried in the beautiful chapel of Westminster Abbey, which he had himself founded, and which still bears his name.

It was in this reign that Christopher Columbus discovered what was then called the New World. Great wonder and hope of wealth being awakened in England thereby, the king and the merchants of London fitted out an English expedition for further discoveries, and intrusted it to Sebastian Cabot, of Bristol, the son of a Venetian pilot there. He was very successful in his voyage, and gained high reputation, both for himself and England.

HENRY VII. CROWNED ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HENRY VIII.

We now come to King Henry VIII., whom it has been the fashion to call "Bluff King Hal," and "Burly King Harry," and other fine names, but whom I shall take the liberty to call plainly one of the most detestable villains that ever drew breath. You will be able to judge whether he deserves the character.

He was just eighteen when he came to the throne. People said he was handsome then, but I don't believe it. He was a big, burly, noisy, small-eyed, large-faced, double-chinned, swinish-looking fellow, and it is not easy to believe that so bad a character can ever have been veiled under a prepossessing appearance.

He was anxious to make himself popular. He was extremely fond of show and display, and so were the people; therefore there was great rejoicing when he married the Princess Catharine, and when they were both crowned. And the king fought at tournaments, and always came off victorious—for the courtiers took care of that, and there was a general outcry that he was a wonderful man. Empson, Dudley and their supporters were accused of a variety of crimes they never committed, and they were pilloried, and set upon horses with their faces to the tails, and knocked about and beheaded, to the satisfaction of the people and the enrichment of the king.

The pope, so indefatigable in getting the world into trouble, had mixed himself up in a war on the continent of Europe, occasioned by the reigning princes of little quarrelling states in Italy having at various times mar-

ried into other royal families, and so led to *their* claiming a share in those petty governments. The king, who discovered that he was very fond of the pope, sent a herald to the King of France to say that he must not make war upon that holy personage, because he was the father of all Christians. As the French king did not mind this relationship and refused to admit a claim King Henry made to certain lands in France, war was declared between the two countries. Not to perplex this story with an account of the tricks and designs of all the sovereigns who were engaged in it, it is enough to say that England made a blundering alliance with Spain and got stupidly taken in by that country, which made its own terms with France and left England in the lurch. The king took it into his head to invade France in person, first executing that dangerous Earl of Suffolk, whom his father had left in the Tower, and appointing Queen Catharine to the charge of his kingdom in his absence. He sailed to Calais, where he was joined by Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, who pretended to be his soldier, and who took pay in his service—with a good deal of nonsense of that sort, flattering enough to the vanity of a vain blusterer. Fortune, however, favored him better than he deserved, for after much waste of time in tent-pitching, flag-flying, gold-curtaining, and other such masquerading, he gave the French battle at Guinegate, where they took such a panic and fled with such swiftness that it was ever afterwards called by the English the Battle of Spurs. Instead of following up his advantage, the king, finding that he had had enough of real fighting, came home again.

The Scottish king, though nearly related to Henry by marriage, had taken part against him in this war. The Earl of Surrey, as the English general, advanced to meet him. The two armies came up with one another, and were encamped upon the Hill of Flodden. Along the plain below it the English, when the hour of battle came,

advanced. The Scottish army, which had been drawn up in five great bodies, then came steadily down in perfect silence. So they, in their turn, advanced to meet the English army, which came on in one long line, and they attacked it with a body of spearmen. At first they had the best of it; but the English recovered themselves and fought with such valor that Scottish power was routed. Ten thousand Scottish men lay dead that day on Flodden Field, and among them numbers of the nobility and gentry. For a long time afterwards the Scottish peasantry believed that their king had not been killed in this battle, because no Englishman had found an iron belt he wore about his body as a penance for having been an undutiful son. But whatever became of his belt, the English had his sword and dagger, and the ring from his finger, and his body, too, covered with wounds. There is no doubt of it, for it was seen and recognized by English gentlemen who had known the Scottish king well.

When Henry was making ready to renew the war in France, the French king was contemplating peace. His queen dying at this time, he proposed to marry Henry's sister, the Princess Mary, who, besides being only sixteen, was betrothed to the Duke of Suffolk. The marriage was concluded, and the poor girl was escorted to France, where she was left as the French king's bride, with only one of all her English attendants. That one was a pretty young girl named Anne Boleyn, niece of the Earl of Surrey, who had been made Duke of Norfolk after the victory of Flodden Field.

The French king, who was proud of his young wife, was preparing for many years of happiness, and she was looking forward to many years of misery, when he died within three months, and left her a young widow. The new French monarch, Francis I., seeing how important it was to his interests that she should take for her second husband no one but an Englishman, advised her first lover,

the Duke of Suffolk (when Henry sent him over to France to fetch her home), to marry her. The princess being fond of that duke, they were wedded, and Henry afterwards forgave them. In making interest with the king, the Duke of Suffolk had addressed his most powerful favorite and adviser, Thomas Wolsey—a name very famous in history for its rise and downfall.

Wolsey was the son of a respectable butcher at Ipswich, and received so excellent an education that he became a tutor to the family of the Marquis of Dorset, who afterwards got him appointed one of the late king's chaplains. On the accession of Henry he was promoted and taken into favor. He was now Archbishop of York; the pope had made him a cardinal besides; and whoever wanted influence in England, or favor with the king, was obliged to make a friend of the great Cardinal Wolsey.

He was a gay man, who could dance and jest and sing and drink; and those were the roads to so much, or rather so little, of a heart as King Henry had. He was wonderfully fond of pomp and glitter, and so was the king. He knew a good deal of the church learning of that time, much of which consisted in finding artful excuses and pretences for almost any wrong thing, and in arguing that black was white, or any other color. This kind of learning pleased the king, too. The cardinal was high in estimation with the king, and being a man of great ability, knew as well how to manage him as a clever keeper may know how to manage a wolf or a tiger, or any other cruel and uncertain beast that may turn upon him and tear him any day. Never had there been seen in England such state as my lord cardinal kept. His wealth was enormous—equal, it was reckoned, to the riches of the crown. His palaces were as splendid as the king's, and his retinue was eight hundred strong. He held his court dressed out from top to toe in flaming scarlet, and his very shoes were golden, set with precious stones. His fol-

lowers rode on blooded horses, while he, with a wonderful affectation of humility in the midst of his great splendor, ambled on a mule with a red velvet saddle and bridle and golden stirrups.

Through the influence of this stately priest a grand meeting was arranged to take place between the French and English kings in France, but on ground belonging to England. A prodigious show of friendship and rejoicing was to be made on the occasion, and heralds were sent to proclaim with brazen trumpets through all the principal cities of Europe that the Kings of France and England, as brothers in arms, each attended by eighteen followers, would hold a tournament against all knights who might choose to come.

Charles, the new Emperor of Germany, wanted to prevent too cordial an alliance between these sovereigns, and came over to England before the king could repair to the place of meeting, and secured Wolsey's interest by promising that his influence should make him pope when the next vacancy occurred. On the day when the emperor left England the king and all the court went over to Calais, and thence to the place of meeting, commonly called the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Here all manner of expense and prodigality was lavished on the decorations of the show, many of the knights and gentlemen being so superbly dressed that it was said they carried their whole estates upon their shoulders.

There were sham castles, temporary chapels, fountains of running wine, great cellars full of wine free as water to all comers, silk tents, gold lace and foil, gilt lions, and such things without end; and in the midst of all the rich cardinal outshone and out-glittered all the noblemen and gentlemen assembled. After a treaty made between the two kings the lists were opened for the tournament, the Queens of France and England looking on with great array of lords and ladies. Then for ten days the two sovereigns

HENRY VIII.

fought five combats every day and always beat their polite adversaries, though they *do* write that the King of England, being thrown in a wrestle one day by the King of France, lost his kingly temper with his brother in arms and wanted to make a quarrel of it. Then there is a great story belonging to this Field of the Cloth of Gold, showing how the English were distrustful of the French, and the French of the English, until Francis rode alone one morning to Henry's tent, and, going in before he was out of bed, told him in joke that he was his prisoner, and how Henry jumped out of bed and embraced Francis, and how Francis helped Henry to dress and warmed his linen for him, and how Henry gave Francis a splendid jewelled collar, and how Francis gave Henry, in return, a costly bracelet. All this was so written about that the world has had good cause to be sick of it forever.

Of course, nothing came of all these fine doings but a speedy renewal of the war between England and France, in which the two royal companions and brothers in arms longed very earnestly to damage one another. Before it broke out again the Duke of Buckingham was shamefully executed on Tower Hill, on the evidence of a discharged servant—really for nothing. It was believed that the unfortunate duke had given offence to the cardinal by expressing his mind freely about the expense and absurdity of the whole business of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. At any rate, he was beheaded, as I have said, for nothing. And the people who saw it done were very angry, and cried out that it was the work of "the butcher's son!"

The new war was a short one, though the Earl of Surrey invaded France again, and did some injury to that country. It ended in another treaty of peace between the two kingdoms, and in the discovery that the Emperor of Germany was not such a good friend to England as he pretended to be. Neither did he keep his promise to Wolsey

to make him pope, though the king urged him. Two popes died in quick succession, but the foreign priests were too much for the cardinal, and kept him out of the

MARTIN LUTHER.

post. So the cardinal and king together found out that the Emperor of Germany was not a man to keep faith with, broke off a projected marriage between the king's daughter, Mary, Princess of Wales, and that sovereign, and began to consider whether it might not be well to

marry the young lady either to Francis himself, or to his eldest son.

There now arose in Germany the great leader of the mighty change in England which is called The Reformation, and which set the people free from their slavery to the priests. This was a learned doctor, named Martin Luther, who knew all about them, for he had been a priest, and even a monk, himself. The preaching and writing of Wickliffe had set a number of men thinking on this subject, and Luther finding one day, to his great surprise, that there really was a book called the New Testament which the priests did not allow to be read, and which contained truths that they suppressed, began to be very vigorous against the whole body, from the pope downward. It happened, while he was yet only beginning his vast work of awakening the nation, that a fellow named Tetzel, a friar of very bad character, came into his neighborhood selling what were called indulgences by wholesale, to raise money for beautifying the great Cathedral of St. Peter's at Rome. Whoever bought an indulgence of the pope was supposed to buy himself off from the punishment of heaven for his offences. Luther told the people that these indulgences were worthless bits of paper, and that Tetzel and his masters were a crew of impostors in selling them.

The king and the cardinal were mightily indignant at this presumption, and the king (with the help of Sir Thomas More, a wise man, whom he afterwards repaid by striking off his head) even wrote a book about it, with which the pope was so well pleased that he gave the king the title of Defender of the Faith. The king and the cardinal also issued flaming warnings to the people not to read Luther's books, on pain of excommunication. But they read them for all that, and the rumor of what was in them spread far and wide.

When this great change was thus going on, the king began to show himself in his true colors. Anne Boleyn, the

pretty little girl who had gone abroad to France with his sister, was by this time grown up to be very beautiful, and was one of the ladies in attendance on Queen Catharine. Now Queen Catharine was no longer young or handsome, and it is likely that she was not particularly good-tempered, having been always rather melancholy, and having been made more so by the deaths of four of her children when they were very young. So the king fell in love with the fair Anne Boleyn, and said to himself, "How can I be best rid of my own troublesome wife, whom I am tired of, and marry Anne?"

Catharine had been previously married to Henry's brother. What does the king do but call his favorite priests about him and says, "O, his mind is in such a dreadful state, and he is so frightfully uneasy, because he is afraid it was not lawful for him to marry the queen!" Not one of those priests had the courage to hint that it was rather curious he had never thought of that before, and that his mind seemed to have been in a tolerably jolly condition during a great many years, in which he certainly had not fretted himself thin, but they all said, Ah! that was very true, and it was a serious business, and perhaps the best way to make it right would be for his Majesty to be divorced! The king replied, Yes; he thought that would be the best way, certainly; so they all went to work.

After a vast deal of negotiation and evasion, the pope issued a commission to Cardinal Wolsey and Cardinal Campeggio (whom he sent over from Italy for the purpose) to try the whole case in England. It is supposed that Wolsey was the queen's enemy, because she had reproved him for his proud manner of life. He did not know that the king wanted to marry Anne Boleyn, and when he did know it he went down on his knees in the endeavor to dissuade him.

The cardinals opened their court in the Convent of the

Black Friars, near to where the bridge of that name in London now stands, and the king and queen, that they might be near it, took up their lodgings at the adjoining palace of Bridewell, of which nothing now remains but a bad prison. On the opening of the court, when the king and queen were called on to appear, that poor, ill-used lady, with a dignity and firmness, and yet with a womanly affection worthy to be always admired, went and kneeled at the king's feet, and said that she had come a stranger to his dominions, that she had been a good and true wife to him for twenty years, and that she could acknowledge no power in those cardinals to try whether she should be considered his wife after all that time, or should be put away. With that she got up and left the court, and never afterwards came back to it.

The king pretended to be very much overcome and said, "O my lords and gentlemen, what a good woman she was to be sure," and how delighted he would be to live with her unto death, but for that terrible uneasiness in his mind, which was quite wearing him away! So the case went on, and there was nothing but talk for two months. Then Cardinal Campeggio, on behalf of the pope, adjourned it for two months, and before that time was elapsed the pope himself adjourned it indefinitely by requiring the king and queen to come to Rome and have it tried there. But, by good luck for the king, word was brought to him that Thomas Cranmer, a learned doctor of Cambridge, had proposed to urge the pope on by referring the case to all the learned doctors and bishops here and there and everywhere, and getting their opinions that the king's marriage was unlawful. The king, who was now in a hurry to marry Anne Boleyn, thought this such a good idea that he sent for Cranmer, and said to Lord Rochfort, Anne Boleyn's father, "Take this learned doctor down to your country-house, and there let him have a good room for a study, and no end of books out of

which to prove that I may marry your daughter." Rochfort made the learned doctor comfortable, and the learned doctor went to work to prove his case. All this time the king and Anne Boleyn were writing letters daily to one another, full of impatience to have the case settled, and Anne Boleyn was showing herself (as I think) very worthy of the fate which afterwards befell her.

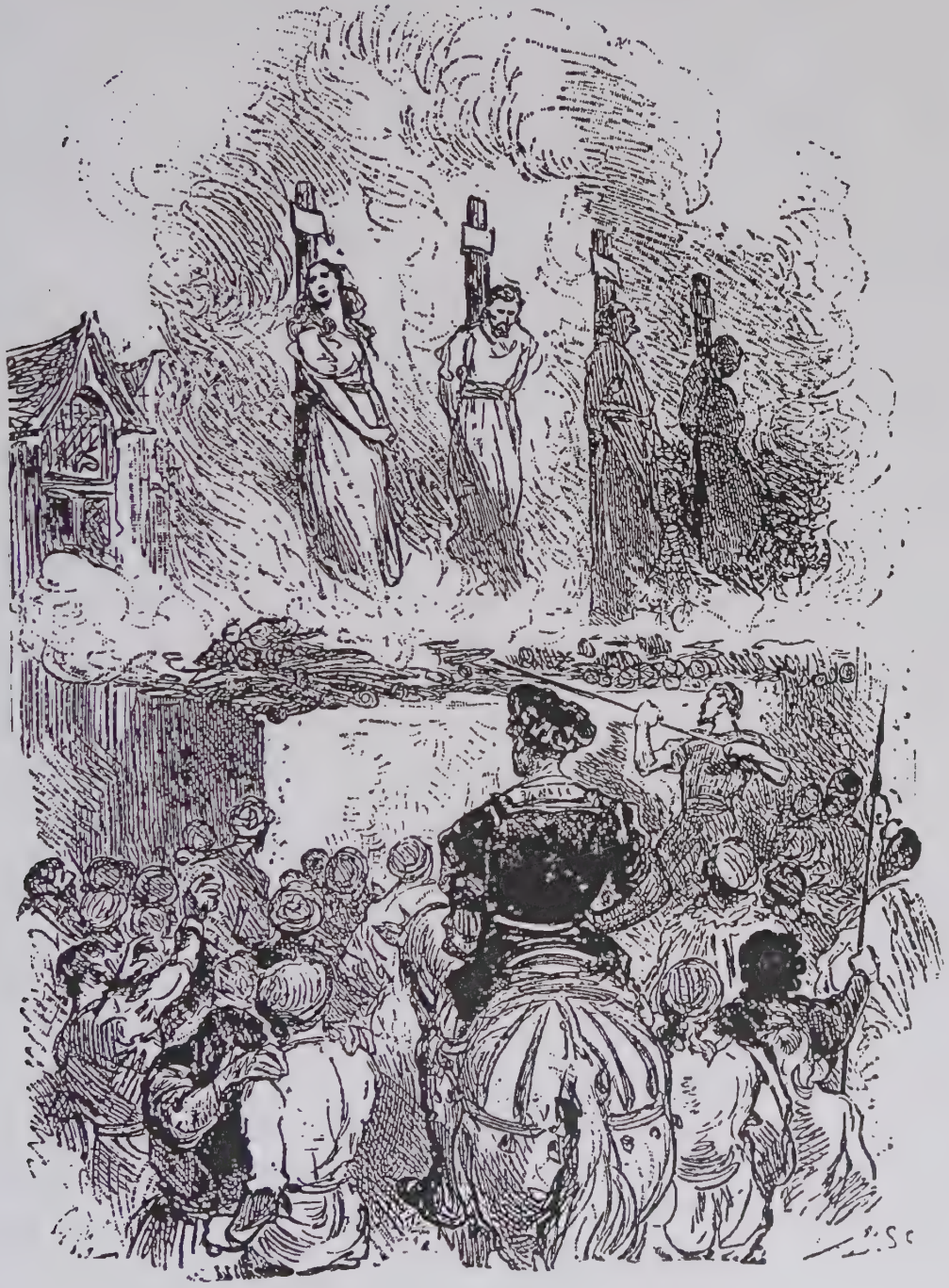
It was bad for Cardinal Wolsey that he had left Cranmer to render this help. It was worse for him that he had tried to dissuade the king from marrying Anne Boleyn. Such a servant as he, to such a master as Henry, would probably have fallen in any case, but between the hatred of the party of the queen that was and the hatred of the party of the queen that was to be he fell suddenly and heavily. Going down one day to the court of chancery, where he now presided, he was waited upon by the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, who told him that they brought an order to him to resign that office. The cardinal refusing, they rode off to the king, and next day came back with a letter from him, on reading which the cardinal submitted. An inventory was made out of all the riches in his palace at York Place (now Whitehall), and he went sorrowfully up the river in his barge to Putney. An abject man he was, in spite of his pride; for being overtaken, riding out of that place towards Esher, by one of the king's chamberlains who brought him a kind message and a ring, he alighted from his mule, took off his cap, and kneeled down in the dirt.

The once proud cardinal was soon further disgraced, and wrote the most abject letters to his vile sovereign, who humbled him one day and encouraged him the next, according to his humor, until he was at last ordered to go and reside in his diocese of York. He said he was too poor, but I don't know how he made that out, for he took a hundred and sixty servants with him, and seventy-two cart-loads of furniture, food and wine. He remained there

nearly a year, and showed himself so improved by his misfortunes, and was so conciliating, that he won all hearts. At last he was arrested for high treason, and, coming slowly on his journey towards London, got as far as Leicester. Arriving at Leicester Abbey after dark, and very ill, he said—when the monks came out at the gate with lighted torches to receive him—that he had come to lay his bones among them. He had, indeed, for he was taken to a bed, from which he never rose again. His last words were, "Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs. Howbeit, this is my just reward for my pains and diligence, not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince." The news of his death was quickly carried to the king, who was amusing himself with archery in the garden of the magnificent palace at Hampton Court which that very Wolsey had presented to him. The greatest emotion his royal mind displayed was a particular desire to lay hold of fifteen hundred pounds which the cardinal was reported to have hidden somewhere.

The opinions concerning the divorce being at last collected, and being generally in the king's favor, were forwarded to the pope, with an entreaty that he would now grant it. The unfortunate Pope, who was a timid man, was half distracted between his fear of his authority being set aside in England if he did not do as he was asked, and his dread of offending the Emperor of Germany, who was Queen Catharine's nephew. In this state of mind he still evaded, and did nothing. Then Thomas Cromwell, who had been one of Wolsey's faithful attendants, advised the king to take the matter into his own hands, and make himself the head of the whole church. This the king, by various artful means, began to do, but he recompensed the clergy by allowing them to burn as many people as they pleased for holding Luther's opinions. Sir Thomas More, the wise man who had helped the king with his

book, had been made chancellor in Wolsey's place. But



BURNING AT THE STAKE.

as he was truly attached to the Church as it was, even in its abuses, he, in this state of things, resigned.

Being resolved to get rid of Catharine, and to marry Anne Boleyn without more ado, the king made Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury, and directed Catharine to leave the court. She obeyed, but replied that wherever she went she was Queen of England still, and would remain so to the last. The king then married Anne Boleyn privately, and the new Archbishop of Canterbury, within half a year, declared his marriage with Queen Catharine void, and crowned Anne Boleyn queen.

She might have known that no good could ever come from such wrong, and that the corpulent brute who had been so faithless and so cruel to his first wife could be more faithless and more cruel to his second. She might have known that even when he was in love with her he had been a mean and selfish coward, running away, like a frightened cur, from her society and her house when a dangerous sickness broke out in it. But Anne Boleyn arrived at all this knowledge too late, and bought it at a dear price. Her bad marriage with a worse man came to its natural end.

The pope was in an angry state of mind when he heard of the king's marriage, and fumed exceedingly. Many of the English monks and friars, seeing that their order was in danger, did the same; some even declaimed against the king in church, before his face, and were not to be stopped until he himself roared out, "Silence!" The king, not much the worse for this, took it quietly, and was very glad when his queen gave birth to a daughter, who was christened Elizabeth and declared Princess of Wales, as her sister Mary had already been.

One of the most atrocious features of this reign was that Henry VIII. was always trimming between the reformed religion and the unreformed one, so that the more he quarrelled with the pope the more of his own subjects he roasted alive for not holding the Pope's opinion. Thus, an unfortunate student and a poor, simple tailor were burnt in Smithfield, to show what a capital Christian the king was.

But these were speedily followed by two much greater victims, Sir Thomas More and John Fisher, the Bishop of Rochester. The latter, who was a good and amiable old man, had committed no greater offence than believing in Elizabeth Barton, called the Maid of Kent, another of those ridiculous women who pretended to be inspired and to make all sorts of heavenly revelations. For this offence, as it was pretended, but really for denying the king to be the supreme head of the Church, he got into trouble and was put in prison; but even then he might have been suffered to die naturally but that the pope, to spite the king, made him a cardinal. Upon that the king made a ferocious joke to the effect that the pope might send Fisher a red hat (which is the way they make a cardinal) but he should have no head on which to wear it, and he was tried with all unfairness and injustice and sentenced to death. He died like a noble and virtuous old man. The king supposed that Sir Thomas More would be frightened by this example; but as he was not easily terrified, and, thoroughly believing in the pope, had made up his mind that the king was not the rightful head of the Church, he positively refused to say that he was. For this crime he, too, was tried and sentenced, after having been in prison a year. When he was doomed to death, and came away from his trial with the edge of the executioner's axe turned towards him, he bore it serenely. When he was going up the steps of the scaffold to his death he said jokingly, to the lieutenant of the tower, "I pray you, Master Lieutenant, see me safe up, and for my coming down, I can shift for myself." Also, he said to the executioner, after he had laid his head upon the block, "Let me put my beard out of the way, for that, at least, has never committed any treason." Then his head was struck off at a blow. These two executions were worthy of King Henry VIII. Sir Thomas More was one of the most virtuous men in his dominions, and the bishop was one of his old-

est and truest friends. But to be a friend of that fellow was almost as dangerous as to be his wife.

When the news of these two murders got to Rome the pope raged against the murderer more than ever pope raged since the world began, and prepared a bull, ordering his subjects to take arms against him and dethrone him The king took all possible precautions to keep that document out of his dominions, and set to work, in return, to suppress a great number of the English monasteries and abbeys.

This destruction was begun by a body of commissioners, of whom Cromwell (whom the king had taken into great favor) was the head, and was carried on through some few years to its entire completion. There is no doubt that many of these religious establishments were religious in nothing but in name, and were crammed with lazy, indolent, and sensual monks. But there is no doubt, either, that the king's officers and men punished the good monks with the bad, did great injustice, demolished many beautiful things and many valuable libraries, destroyed numbers of paintings, stained-glass windows, fine pavements and carvings, and that the whole court were ravenously greedy and rapacious for the division of this great spoil among them. The king seems to have grown almost mad in the ardor of this pursuit, for he declared Thomas à Becket a traitor, though he had been dead so many years, and had his body dug up out of his grave. He must have been as miraculous as the monks pretended, if they had told the truth, for he was found with one head on his shoulders, and they had shown another as his undoubted and genuine head ever since his death, it had brought them vast sums of money, too. The gold and jewels on his shrine filled two great chests, and eight men tottered as they carried them away. How rich the monasteries were you may infer from the fact that when they were all suppressed one hundred and thirty thousand pounds

a year—in those days an immense sum—came to the crown.

These things were not done without causing great discontent among the people. The monks had been good landlords and hospitable entertainers of all travellers, and had been accustomed to give away a great deal of corn and fruit, and meat, and other things. In those days it was difficult to change goods into money in consequence of the roads being very few and very bad, and the carts and wagons of the worst description, and they must either have given away some of the good things they possessed in enormous quantities, or have suffered them to spoil and moulder. So many of the people missed what it was more agreeable to get idly than to work for, and the monks who were driven out of their homes and wandered about encouraged their discontent, and there were, consequently, great risings in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. These were put down by terrific executions, from which the monks themselves did not escape, and the king went on grunting and growling in his own fat way, like a royal pig.

I have told this story of the religious houses at one time, to make it plainer, and to get back to the king's domestic affairs.

The unfortunate Queen Catharine was by this time dead, and the king was by this time as tired of his second queen as he had been of his first. As he had fallen in love with Anne when she was in the service of Catharine, so he now fell in love with another lady in the service of Anne. See how wicked deeds are punished, and how bitterly and self-reproachfully the queen must now have thought of her own rise to the throne! The new fancy was a Lady Jane Seymour, and the king no sooner set his mind on her than he resolved to have Anne Boleyn's head. So he brought a number of charges against Anne, accusing her of dreadful crimes which she had never committed, and implicating in them her own brother and certain gen-

tlemen in her service. As the lords and councillors were as afraid of the king and as subservient to him as the meanest peasant in England was, they brought in Anne Boleyn guilty, and the other unfortunate persons accused with her, guilty, too. These gentlemen died like men. There was then only the queen to dispose of. She had been surrounded in the Tower with women spies, had been monstrously persecuted and foully slandered, and had received no justice. But her spirit rose with her afflictions, and after having in vain tried to soften the king by writing an affecting letter to him, which still exists, "from her doleful prison in the Tower," she resigned herself to death. She said to those about her, very cheerfully, that she had heard say the executioner was a good one, and that she had a little neck (she laughed and clasped it with her hands as she said that), and would soon be out of her pain. And she *was* soon out of pain, poor creature! on the green inside the Tower, and her body was flung into an old box and put away into the ground under the chapel.

There is a story that the king sat in his palace listening very anxiously for the sound of the cannon which was to announce this new murder, and that when he heard it come booming on the air he rose up in great spirits and ordered out his dogs to go a-hunting. He was bad enough to do it; but whether he did it or not, it is certain that he married Jane Seymour the very next day.

I have not much pleasure in recording that she lived just long enough to give birth to a son, who was christened Edward, and then to die of fever, for I cannot but think that any woman who married such a ruffian, and knew what innocent blood was on his hands, deserved the axe, that would assuredly have fallen on the neck of Jane Seymour if she had lived much longer.

Cranmer had done what he could to save some of the Church property for purposes of religion and education,

but the great families had been so hungry to get hold of it that very little could be rescued for such objects. Even Miles Coverdale, who did the people the inestimable service of translating the Bible into English (which the unreformed religion never permitted to be done), was left in poverty, while the great families clutched the Church lands and money. The people had been told that when the crown came into possession of these funds it would not be necessary to tax them; but they were taxed afresh, directly afterwards. It was fortunate for them, indeed, that so many nobles were so greedy for this wealth, since, if it had remained with the crown, there might have been no end to tyranny for hundreds of years. One of the most active writers on the Church's side, against the king, was a member of his own family, a sort of distant cousin, Reginald Pole by name, who attacked him in the most violent manner (though he received a pension from him all the time), and fought for the Church with his pen day and night. As he was beyond the king's reach, being in Italy, the king politely invited him over to discuss the subject; but he wisely staying where he was, the king's rage fell upon his brother, Lord Montague, the Marquis of Exeter, and some other gentlemen, who were tried for high treason in corresponding with him and aiding him, which they probably did, and were all executed. The pope made Reginald Pole a cardinal, but so much against his will that it is thought he even aspired in his mind to the vacant throne of England, and had hopes of marrying the Princess Mary. His being made a high priest, however, put an end to all that. His mother, the venerable Countess of Salisbury, who was, unfortunately for herself, within the tyrant's reach, was the last of his relatives on whom his wrath fell. When she was told to lay her gray head upon the block she answered the executioner, "No! my head never committed treason, and if you want it you shall seize it!" So she ran around and around the scaffold, with the execu-

tioner striking at her and her gray hair bedabbled with blood; and even when they held her down upon the block she moved her head about to the last, resolved to be no party to her own barbarous murder. All this the people bore, as they had borne everything else.

Indeed, they bore much more, for the slow fires of Smithfield were continually burning, and people were constantly being roasted to death—still to show what a good Christian the king was. He defied the pope and his bull, which was now issued and had come into England; but he burned innumerable people, whose only offense was that they differed from the pope's religious opinions. There was a wretched man named Lambert, among others, who was tried for this before the king, and with whom six bishops argued, one after another. When he was quite exhausted (as well he might be, after six bishops), he threw himself on the king's mercy, but the king blustered out that he had no mercy for heretics. So *he*, too, fed the fire.

All this the people bore, and more than all this yet. The national spirit seems to have been banished from the kingdom at this time. The very people who were executed for treason, the very wives and friends of the "bluff" king, spoke of him on the scaffold as a good prince and a gentle prince, just as serfs in similar circumstances have been known to do under the sultans and bashaws of the East, or under the fierce old tyrants of Russia, who poured boiling and freezing water on them alternately, until they died. The Parliament was as bad as the rest, and gave the king whatever he wanted; among other vile accommodations they gave him new powers of murdering, at his will and pleasure, any one whom he might choose to call a traitor. But the worst measure they passed was an act of six articles, commonly called at the time "the whip with six strings," which punished offences against the pope's opinions without mercy, and enforced the very worst parts of the monkish religion. Cranmer would have

HENRY VIII. AND ANNE OF CLEVES.

modified it if he could, but being overborne by the Romish party, had not the power. As one of the articles declared that priests should not marry, and as he was himself married, he sent his wife and children into Germany and began to tremble at his danger; none the less because he was, and had long been, the king's friend. This whip of six strings was made under the king's own eye. It should never be forgotten of him how cruelly he supported the worst of the popish doctrines, when there was nothing to be got by opposing them.

This amiable monarch now thought of taking another wife. He proposed to the French king to have some of the ladies of the French court exhibited before him, that he might have his royal choice; but the French king answered that he would not have his ladies trotted out to be shown like horses at a fair. He proposed to the Dowager Duchess of Milan, who replied that she might have thought of such a match if she had had two heads, but that, only owning one, she must beg to keep it safe. At last, Cromwell representing that there was a Protestant princess in Germany (those who held the reformed religion were called Protestants, because their leaders had protested against the abuses of the unreformed church), named Anne of Cleves, who was beautiful, and would answer the purpose admirably, the king said, Was she a large woman? because he must have a fat wife. "O yes!" said Cromwell, "she was very large, just the thing." On hearing this, the king sent over Hans Holbein to take her portrait. Hans made her out to be so good-looking that the king was satisfied and the marriage was arranged. When Anne came over, and the king went to Rochester to meet her, and first saw her without her seeing him, he swore she was "a great Flanders mare," and said he would never marry her. Being obliged to do it, now matters had gone so far, he would not give her the presents he had prepared, and would never notice her. He never forgave Crom-

well his part in the affair. His downfall dates from that time.

It was quickened by his enemies, in the interests of the unreformed religion, putting in the king's way a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, Catherine Howard, a young lady of fascinating manners, though small in stature and not particularly beautiful. Falling in love with her on the spot, the king soon divorced Anne of Cleves, after making her the subject of much brutal talk, on pretence that she had been previously betrothed to some one else—which would never do for one of his dignity—and married Catherine. On his wedding-day, of all days in the year, he sent his faithful Cromwell to the scaffold, and had his head struck off. He further celebrated the occasion by burning at one time, and causing to be drawn to the fire on the same hurdles, some Protestant prisoners for denying the pope's doctrines, and some Roman Catholic prisoners for denying his own supremacy. Still the people bore it, and not a gentleman in England raised his hand.

But, by a just retribution, it soon came out that Catherine Howard, before her marriage, had been really guilty of such crimes as the king had falsely attributed to his second wife, Anne Boleyn; so again the dreadful axe made the king a widower, and this queen passed away as so many in that reign had passed away before her. As an appropriate pursuit under the circumstances, Henry then applied himself to superintending the composition of a religious book called "A Necessary Doctrine for any Christian Man." He must have been a little confused in his mind, I think, at about this period, for he was so false to himself as to be true to some one—that some one being Cranmer, whom the Duke of Norfolk and others of his enemies tried to ruin, but to whom the king was steadfast, and to whom he one night gave his ring, charging him, when he should find himself next day accused of treason, to show it to the council board. This Cranmer did, to the

confusion of his enemies. I suppose the king thought he might want him a little longer.

He married yet once more. Yes, strange to say, he found in England another woman who would become his wife; and she was Catherine Parr, widow of Lord Latimer. She leaned toward the reformed religion; and it is some comfort to know that she tormented the king considerably by arguing a variety of doctrinal points with him on all possible occasions. She had very nearly done this to her own destruction. After one of these conversations, the king, in a very black mood, actually instructed Gardiner, one of the bishops who favored the popish opinions, to draw a bill of accusation against her, which would have inevitably brought her to the scaffold where her predecessors had died, but that one of her friends picked up the paper of instructions, which had been dropped in the palace, and gave her timely notice. She fell ill with terror, but managed the king so well when he came to entrap her into further statements, by saying that she had only spoken on such points to divert his mind and to get some information from his extraordinary wisdom, that he gave her a kiss and called her his sweetheart; and when the chancellor came next day, actually to take her to the Tower, the king sent him about his business, and honored him with the epithets of a beast, a knave, and a fool. So near was Catherine Parr to the block, and so narrow was her escape!

There was a war with Scotland in this reign, and a short, clumsy war with France for favoring Scotland; but the events at home were so dreadful, and leave such an enduring stain on the country, that I need say no more of what happened abroad.

A few more horrors, and this reign is over. There was a lady, Anne Askew, in Lincolnshire, who inclined to the Protestant opinions, and whose husband, being a fierce Catholic, turned her out of the house. She came to Lon-

don, and was considered as offending against the six articles, and was taken to the Tower and put upon the rack, probably because it was hoped she might, in her agony, criminate some obnoxious persons; if falsely, so much the better. She was tortured without uttering a cry, until the Lieutenant of the Tower would suffer his men to torture her no more; and then two priests who were present actually pulled off their robes and turned the wheels of the rack with their own hands, so rending and twisting and breaking her that she was afterwards carried to the fire in a chair. She was burned with three others—a gentleman, a clergyman, and a tailor.

Either the king became afraid of the power of the Duke of Norfolk and his son, the Earl of Surrey, or they gave him some offence, but he resolved to pull *them* down, to follow all the rest who were gone. The son was tried first—of course for nothing—and defended himself bravely; but of course he was found guilty, and of course he was executed. Then his father was laid hold of and left for death, too.

But the king himself was left for death by a greater King, and the earth was to be rid of him at last. He was now a swollen, hideous spectacle, with a great hole in his leg, and so odious to every sense that it was dreadful to approach him. When he was found to be dying Cranmer was sent for, and came, but found him speechless. Happily, in that hour he perished. He was in the fifty-sixth year of his age and thirty-eighth of his reign.

Henry VIII. has been favored by some Protestant writers because the Reformation was achieved in his time. But the mighty merit of it lies with other men, and not with him, and it can be rendered none the worse by this monster's crimes, and none the better by any defence of them. The plain truth is that he was a most intolerable ruffian, a disgrace to human nature, and a blot of blood and grease upon the history of England.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EDWARD VI.

HENRY VIII. had made a will, which was set aside by the Earl of Hertford, who was made Protector of the young king. He was made Duke of Somerset, and then sent troops to Scotland to force the marriage between Mary and Edward. He did not bring back the young queen, who was sent to France to wed the Dauphin, Francis II.

Somerset gave great aid to the Reformers. The king, who was but ten years old when he came to the throne, had been brought up by strong Protestants, and hence he held their views. He was quick, bright, and well schooled.

The first foe Somerset had to deal with was his own brother Thomas, Lord Seymour, who was wed to the widow, Queen Katherine Parr. He was beheaded, and there were many who thought it horrible for one to send his brother to the block.

He was harsh to the young king, and worse to the nobles, who at last leagued to get rid of him, and they did, and he was brought to the same block to which he had sent his brother.

The Duke of Northumberland now took the helm of state. Of religion he had none, but he set up for a Protestant and was hailed with joy by the king's party. He got the dying Edward to change the right of succession—a thing the king had no right to do, but was led to do by the fear that the new faith would not do well with his sister Mary. Edward settled the right to the crown on his cousin Jane Grey, whom Northumberland's fourth

EDWARD VI.

son, Dudley, had just wed. By his prayers Edward gained the consent of Cranmer to this change.

The king died in the sixteenth year of his age and in the seventh of his reign. It is difficult to judge what the character of one so young might afterwards have become among so many bad, ambitious, quarrelling nobles. But he was an amiable boy, of very good abilities, and had nothing coarse or cruel or brutal in his disposition, which, in the son of such a father, is rather surprising.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MARY.

THE Duke of Northumberland intended to keep Edward's death a secret till Mary and Elizabeth had been secured, but Mary's friends warned her, and she made her way at once to Norfolk.

Jane Grey knew nothing of her uncle's schemes, and was amazed when he and four lords knelt to her as their queen. She was proclaimed, but her reign lasted but nine days.

The land looked on Mary as the rightful heir and flocked round her. No voice was raised to cheer the duke as he rode out of the city at the head of his troops against Mary's forces. Not a blow was struck for Jane, and Mary entered London at the head of her friends.

Her first act was to free the Duke of Norfolk, Bishop Gardner, and the other State captives. Northumberland was brought to trial and beheaded, and when he came to die he returned to his old faith.

Mary was attached to the Church of Rome. Cranmer

MARY.

and Latimer were sent to the Tower, and the Mass was said as of old. Her friends wished her to wed Philip Courtenay, Earl of Devon, but she had set her heart upon Philip of Spain. No one liked her choice. To stop the marriage, Thomas Wyatt raised troops in Kent and marched to London to seize the Queen. He made his way to London, but no one joined him, and at Temple Bar he gave himself up, and was beheaded with a lot of his friends. Jane Grey and Dudley were also beheaded.

It was thought that Wyatt's idea was to raise Elizabeth to the throne and wed her to Courtenay. Some urged Mary to put Elizabeth to death, but as there was no proof that she knew what was being done, she was sent off to Woodstock.

Philip came from Spain and married Mary. He was called King of England as long as Mary lived, but Parliament would not grant that he should be crowned or made king if Mary died childless.

The laws against heretics came in force once more. The fires were kindled, and more than two hundred persons, men and women, were burned at the stake. The people tired of this slaughter, and Mary has come down to us with the name of "bloody" fixed on her. Ridley and the aged Latimer were bound to the same stake and burned at Oxford.

The marriage of Mary and Philip was a sad one. She doted on him, but he cared nothing for her. She was eleven years older than he. He went back to his own land as King of Spain, and came back once more to urge Mary to join him in a war against France. It turned out bad. The English lost Calais. It was no great loss, but it was a blow to English pride.

There was a bad fever raging in England at this time, and I am glad to write that the queen took it, and the hour of her death came. "When I am dead and my body is opened," she said to those around her, "ye shall find

Calais written on my heart." I should have thought, if anything were written on it, they would have found the words, "Jane Grey, Hooper, Rogers, Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and three hundred people burnt alive within

QUEEN MARY WATCHING THE EXECUTION OF LADY JANE GREY.

four years of my wicked reign, including sixty women and forty little children." But it is enough that their deaths were written in heaven.

The queen died after reigning not quite five years and a half, and in the forty-fourth year of her age. Cardinal Pole died of the same fever next day.

As Bloody Queen Mary this woman has become famous,

and as bloody Queen Mary she will ever be justly remembered with horror and detestation in Great Britain. Her memory has been held in such abhorrence that some writers have arisen in later years to take her part, and to show that she was, upon the whole, quite an amiable and cheerful sovereign! "By their fruits ye shall know them," said our Saviour. The stake and the fire were the fruits of this reign, and you will judge this queen by nothing else.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ELIZABETH.

THERE was great rejoicing when the lords went to hail the Princess Elizabeth as the new Queen of England. Weary of the barbarities of Mary's reign, the people looked with hope and gladness to the new sovereign. The nation seemed to wake from a horrible dream; and heaven, so long hidden by the smoke of the fires that roasted men and women to death, appeared to brighten once more.

Queen Elizabeth was twenty-six years of age when she rode through the streets of London, from the Tower to Westminster Abbey, to be crowned. Her countenance was strongly marked, but on the whole commanding and dignified; her hair was red, and her nose something too long and sharp for a woman's. She was not the beautiful creature her courtiers made out, but she was well enough, and no doubt looked all the better for coming after the dark and gloomy Mary. She was well educated but a roundabout writer, and rather a hard swearer and coarse talker. She was clever, but cunning and deceitful, and inherited much of her father's violent temper. I mention this now because she has been so over-praised by one

ELIZABETH.

party and so over-abused by another that it is hardly possible to understand the greater part of her reign without first understanding what kind of woman she really was.

She began her reign with the great advantage of having a very wise and careful minister, Sir William Cecil, whom she afterwards made Lord Burleigh.

ELIZABETH AND HER COURTIERS.

In religion her plan was to hold a middle place that should content all; but willing or not, all had to bow to her system. She came, more by the force of things all around her than her own wish, the hope of the Reformers.

Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, came to be looked on as Elizabeth's heir, though she was left out of the will of Henry VIII. The Catholics regarded her as the rightful Queen of England, and she, when in France, took that

title. The Scots were in the main Protestants, but Mary was a Roman Catholic. She was a most lovely woman,

MARY STUART.

and in craft she matched Elizabeth, but lacked her caution and tact. By her folly, if by no worse, she laid herself open to charges of great crimes, for which the Scotch lords forced her to give up her crown to her infant son, James

VI., in the murder of whose father, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, she was thought to have a hand. She escaped from the Scots, who held her a captive, and fled to England and claimed Elizabeth's help. The English held her as a State prisoner.

Round the lovely captive grew no end of plots formed by Catholics, who looked to Spain for help. In the North, where men still clung to the old faith, troops were raised. They were at once put down, and punished with great vigor. A plan was formed to wed her to the Duke of Norfolk, the chief noble in England. It leaked out, and the duke was beheaded. Pope Pius V. absolved Elizabeth's people from their fealty, but in the end this did more harm to the Pope's friends than to the queen. Mary had now been nineteen years a captive and there were calls for her death, and she was beheaded. In the previous year she sent word to Philip that she willed all her rights on England to him, and set aside her son, who had joined the Protestants.

In her dealings with the States around her Elizabeth wavered and lied; but queer as her acts seemed, she was constant to her aim to hold herself free and keep from war as long as she could. Philip strove to keep on good terms with her, but she aided, from time to time, his subjects who warred with him in the Netherlands. When they formed the United Provinces she sent to them aid headed by the Earl of Leicester. It did not do much, but it cost the life of Sir Philip Sidney.

The strife with Spain was kept up by a set of men of much the same stamp as the Vikings of old. They sailed around the world and brought back their spoil to England. Drake went off with five ships and came back with but one, and that was loaded with gold and jewels, the spoils of Spanish towns and ships. Raleigh sailed to America and planted the land which he called Virginia, after the "Virgin Queen" (as Elizabeth was often called).

He brought tobacco to England, and the potato to Ireland.

Spain had longed for years to invade England, and at last got ready the great Armada—that is, fleet—at the call of Pope Sixtus V., and it was looked on as a Holy War. All the great men of the time were in it. There were one hundred and fifty ships, and when Howard learned they were off the Cornish coast he came out with his sixty or seventy ships and hung on the foe's rear. Fresh ships came to him daily till he had one hundred and forty of them. His plan was not to have a close fight with the huge fleet that came up the Channel in the form of a half moon, but to press them with his small ships, that sailed twice as fast as theirs, and could come and go as they chose. The Spanish captain fought as he sailed, and anchored in Calais Woods. To drive him out eight ships were fired and sent drifting with wind and tide amid the Spaniards, who, seized with fear, cut their cables and set out to sea. Though the Spaniards fought well, their huge castle-ships were no match for the small and quick English ships.

The Spaniards flew off to the North Sea. Howard and Drake clung to them till their stores of food ran short. Only fifty-four ships out of the one hundred and fifty lived to creep home. To the English, and to all Protestants, it seemed as though heaven had fought for them.

Leicester died in the midst of the joy. Then came to the queen's favor and grace the Earl of Essex. He had done well at the head of the troops which took the town of Cadiz, in Spain, but he failed in Ireland. The queen found fault with him, so he left his post, unbidden, and came to see Elizabeth, who would not hear his pleas, but took his office from him and ordered him to stay indoors in his own house. He stayed there for a time, and then made a bad move when he tried to get back to power by force. He brought his friends around him and marched to London and called for aid, but none stirred to help him. He

was caught, and fond though the queen was of him, she let him be beheaded.

A story is told that Essex held a ring given him by the queen, and that he had been told, if ever he was in danger, to send her the ring and she would save him. He sent the ring while he was in prison, but it was taken by mistake to one of his bitter enemies, and was never delivered to the queen. She expected to receive the ring, and when it did not arrive, set it down to wilful obstinacy and signed the death-warrant of her kinsman and former favorite.

One bad law at this time was that the crown could grant special trades to favored folks. Thus Essex had the sale of all sweet wines, from which he drew his vast wealth. In 1601 a list of these were read out in Parliament. Elizabeth, though imperious, knew how to yield with grace, and to stop the coming trouble she sent word that she would call back all these special grants.

In 1600 the famed East India Company was formed by a lot of London tradesmen, and from this sprang the British Dominions in India.

The great queen was now drawing towards her end. She suffered greatly from gout in her hands and fingers. Yet she did not complain of pain, but looked forward to journeys and festivities as if she was to live for years. She moved from Whitehall to Richmond. At this time the story of the ring, which had been sent by Essex, but not delivered, was told to her, and her fury was terrible.

After this she grew worse, and could not be persuaded to take food or to go to bed. She appeared almost insensible, not speaking above once in two or three hours, and at last was silent for a whole day, holding her finger almost all the time in her mouth, with her rayless eyes open and fixed on the ground, and she had grown very thin by long watching and fasting. When at last she was put to bed she revived, but soon afterwards became speechless. On the last night of her life the Lords of the Council came to

her, being anxious about the succession. She was too feeble to speak, but it was arranged that she should make a sign when the name of her choice was mentioned. At the names of the King of France and the King of Scotland she remained motionless. Robert Cecil, her chief minister, said she made signs at the last moment that James VI. of Scotland should have the throne. This is not sure, but he was proclaimed king.

Thus died Elizabeth at the age of seventy. Her body was brought by water from Richmond to Whitehall, and she was interred at Westminster in the sight of a dense crowd. Her effigy lay upon the coffin in royal robes, with a crown on the head, and caused a general outburst of sighs, groans and tears. The image of the lion-hearted sovereign may still be seen in Westminster Abbey.

CHAPTER XXX.

JAMES I.

"Our cousin of Scotland" was ugly, awkward, and shuffling, both in mind and person. His tongue was too large for his mouth, his legs were too weak for his body, and his dull, goggle-eyes stared and rolled like an idiot's. He was cunning, covetous, wasteful, idle, drunken, greedy, dirty, cowardly, a great swearer, and the most conceited man on earth. His figure presented a ridiculous appearance, dressed in padded clothes, as a safeguard against being stabbed (of which he lived in continual fear), of a grass-green color, from head to foot, with a hunting-horn dangling at his side instead of a sword, and his hat and feathers sticking over one eye, or hanging on the back of his head, as he happened to toss it on. He used to loll

JAMES I. (175)

on the necks of his favorite courtiers, and slobber their faces and kiss and pinch their cheeks. He was the worst rider ever seen, and thought himself the best. He was one of the most impertinent talkers (in the broadest Scotch) ever heard, and boasted of being unanswerable in all manner of argument. He wrote some wearisome treatises, and thought himself a prodigy of authorship. He thought and wrote and said that a king had a right to make and unmake what laws he pleased. This is the plain, true character of the personage whom the greatest man about the court praised and flattered to that degree that I doubt if there be anything much more shameful in the annals of human nature.

He came to the English throne with great ease. The miseries of a disputed succession had been felt so dreadfully that he was proclaimed within a few hours of Elizabeth's death, and was accepted by the nation without any pledge. He took a month to come from Edinburgh to London, and by way of exercising his new power hanged a pickpocket on the journey without any trial, and knighted everybody he could lay hold of. He made two hundred knights before he got to his palace in London, and seven hundred before he had been in it three months. He also put sixty-two new peers into the House of Lords, and there was a pretty large sprinkling of Scotchmen among them, you may believe.

In the first year of his reign Walter Raleigh was condemned to death on the charge of trying, with the help of Spain, to raise Arabella Stuart, the first cousin of James, to the throne. He was let off from death, and spent thirteen years in a cell in the Tower. Arabella had no share in the plot, and was left alone for eight years, till she wed William Seymour, an heir of the Duchess of Suffolk. This union of two pretenders to the throne scared James, and Arabella was shut up in the Tower, where she went mad, and soon died.

The bishops met and made a change in the prayer-book. A new translation of the Bible was made in 1611, and this is still the "authorized version." The Puritans did not like things as they were settled, but there was no

Sir Walter Raleigh.

help for them, and the way in which the king and the bishops treated them did not tend to soothe matters. In fact, three hundred of their clergy were cleared out of the land. The Catholics fared no better, so they banded to blow up the Parliament, when it was opened by James, and the

Lords. A cellar under the House of Lords was hired and filled with powder. Guy Fawkes was the one fixed upon to set fire to the mine. There were thirteen of them in the plot, and the last man they took in was the cause of their ruin. His brother-in-law was a lord, and he was warned not to attend that day. He told Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, and they looked into the case, and found Fawkes in the cellar. The day fixed upon to blow them all up was November 5, 1605. When the news got out the chief men fled, but were caught and killed. The English now thought hard and bitterly of the Catholics, and put an end to any chance for them for hundreds of years. New and harsh laws were made to hold the "Papists" in check, and a new oath was put on them. Some took it, some would not.

On Salisbury's death the Duke of Buckingham gained the king's good-will and was made chief man in the kingdom. The king's rule did not please the people. In 1606 Raleigh was let out of prison to find a gold-mine that he claimed to know of. He was told to do no harm to the Spanish, but he got into a fight with some of them and burned one of their towns. He did not find the mine, and when he got back he was tried as a pirate, and on this charge was beheaded. This made the people mad. James was now at strife with the Lords. He did not want more power than Elizabeth and the Tudors had; but, while their acts pleased the people, his did not.

In this reign Bacon was put out of office for taking bribes. James wanted to wed his daughter to the young King of Spain, but the people and the Lords did not want this and said so, and the match was broken off. King James died of ague, March 27, 1625. His son Charles came to the throne.

James took the name of King of Great Britain, and on his flag he had the crosses of the saints of England and of Scotland. This was the first "Union Jack."

There was strife in Ireland early in James's reign, and

the Irish were put down, and the lands in Ulster were granted to the English and Scotch troops. This made the trouble worse, as owners and clans were shipped off to other parts of the island. The Irish hated these settlers

DEATH OF RALEIGH.

and longed for their own people and their own lords, harsh though these had been.

In this reign, in 1620, was settled Jamestown, in Vir-

ginia—the first colony of English in America. In the same year more bands of English, who had been cleared out of England and went to Holland, sailed for America, and landed in New England, and settled at Plymouth.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CHARLES I.

King Charles I. came to the throne in the twenty-fifth year of his age. Unlike his father, he was amiable in his private character, and grave and dignified in his bearing; but, like his father, he had monstrously exaggerated notions of the rights of a king, and was evasive and not to be trusted. If his word could have been relied upon, his history might have had a different end.

Charles wed Henrietta Maria, daughter of the great King Henry IV. of France. Though this was less hated than if the queen were from Spain, she was not liked, as she was a Roman Catholic.

Trouble broke out at once between Charles and the Lords. He wanted money for war with Spain; they wanted changes made in some harsh laws, and tried to force Buckingham from rule. Charles cleared out two Parliaments in one year. Buckingham, as he was on his way to fight France, was stabbed to death by one who thought he was doing a good act for his State. Though the duke was gone, the strife was kept up. Charles put taxes on the trade that came in and out of the land—tonnage it was called. This provoked the Commons, and they passed an act which said that he who paid these taxes was a foe to his land. Charles cleared out Parlia-

CHARLES I.

ment once more, and sent the men who passed this act to prison, where some of them staid till their death.

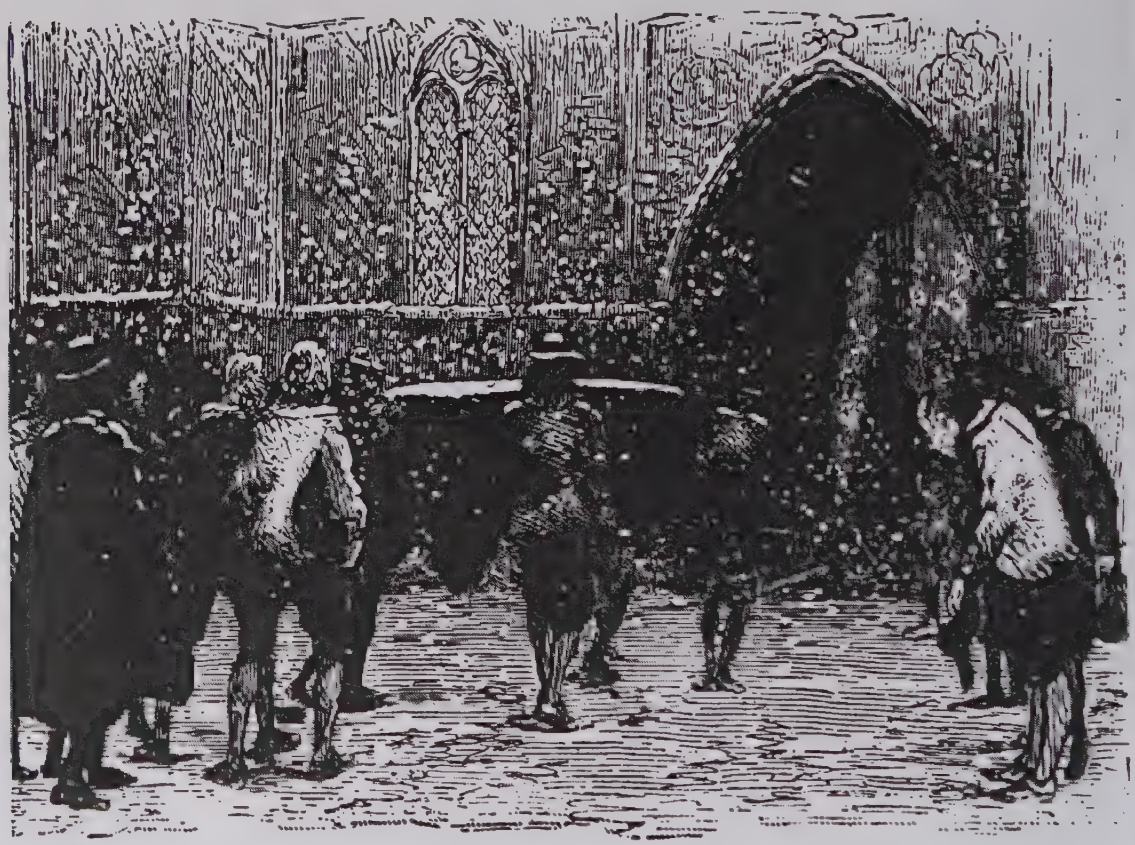
Charles made up his mind to rule without the help of Parliaments, and found two men high in the State to serve his ends. These were Thomas Wentworth and Laud, the Bishop of London. Wentworth had been opposed to the king when in the Commons, but when he came to side with the king he was made a peer of the realm, and known as the Earl of Strafford.

Charles got up a war with the Scotch, but was forced to patch up a truce. He called a Parliament, known as the "Short Parliament," which he threw out in twenty-three days; but the Scotch landed in England, and he had to call a new Parliament, since famed as the "Long Parliament." Strafford and Laud were both brought to trial for treason. Strafford was beheaded, and with him fell the rule he tried so hard to bring into force.

In 1641 the Irish rose and put the English in Ulster to death. It was said that Charles helped this strife. All the Irish Catholics now rose as one man, both in England and Ireland. The king's harsh acts now ruined him. He marched with five hundred men to Parliament, and called for the arrest of the head men there who opposed his acts. They were warned of his coming and got out of the way; as Charles said, "the birds had flown." Some of the great men in the North locked their gates and would not let Charles come in. A lot of the Lords and Commons joined the king, who set up his flag, on which was "Give Cæsar his due." War now began. The two bands were known as "Royalists," those for the king, and "Parliamentarians," or those who sided with the Parliament, or, as they grew to be called, "Cavaliers" and "Roundheads." The last name was given to those Puritans who cropped their hair close, while the stylish way was to wear it long. The Northwest, which was wild and poor, was for the king; while the busy Londoners and the

HENRIETTA MARIA, WIFE OF CHARLES I.

rich from the East, were for Parliament. The first fight was at Edgehill, and things looked well for the king. One of the bravest of the Roundheads was Oliver Cromwell, who raised a troop of horse known as the "Ironsides." He took in none but those whose hearts were with the



Burial of Charles I.

cause and who would bow to strict rule; he cared not with what church sects they acted. He was joined by a large band of Scots, and in a fierce fight at Marston Moor the king was routed. The next year the king and his friends were crushed in a fight at Naseby. Charles kept up the fight till the following spring, when he gave in to the Scots, who turned him over to the English. He was kept lodged in Hampton Court for some months by the

DEATH OF CHARLES I.

Puritan army. He got out, but feared for his life and gave up to the governor of the Isle of Wight, who placed him in Carrisbrooke Castle. The Scots tried to help him, and crossed to England, but were crushed out, and thus ended what was called the "Second Civil War."

Parliament feared the army and tried to treat with Charles, but Cromwell and the troops took hold of the House and kept out those they did not like. Of one hundred and thirty-five members, less than seventy were in their seats; Cromwell was one of these. The king was brought to this "high court," as they were called, and a sentence of death was passed upon "Charles Stuart, King of England," as "a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy to the good people of the nation." The names of fifty-nine members were signed to the warrant for his execution. Charles resigned himself to his fate. He was beheaded January 30, 1642.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

Before sunset on the memorable day on which King Charles I. was executed the House of Commons passed an act declaring it treason in any one to proclaim the Prince of Wales, or anybody else, King of England. Soon afterward it declared that the House of Lords was useless and dangerous, and ought to be abolished. Having laid hold of some famous Royalists who had escaped from prison, and having beheaded the Duke of Hamilton, Lord Holland, and Lord Capel, they then appointed a Council of State to govern the country. It consisted of forty-one

members, of whom five were peers. Bradshaw was made president. The House of Commons also re-admitted mem-

OLIVER CROMWELL.

bers who had opposed the king's death, and made up its members to about a hundred and fifty.

But it still had an army of more than forty thousand men to deal with, and a very hard task it was to manage

them. Before the king's execution the army had appointed some of its officers to remonstrate between them and the Parliament, and now the common soldiers began to take that office upon themselves. The regiments under orders for Ireland mutinied; one troop of horse in the city of London seized their own flag, and refused to obey orders. For this the ringleader was shot, which did not mend the matter, for both his comrades and the people made a public funeral for him. Cromwell was the only man to deal with these difficulties, and he cut them short by bursting at midnight into the town where the mutineers were sheltered, taking four hundred of them prisoners, and shooting a number of them by sentence of court-martial. The soldiers soon found that Oliver was not a man to be trifled with.

The Scottish Parliament did not know Oliver yet; so, on hearing of the king's execution, it proclaimed the Prince of Wales King Charles II., on condition of his respecting the Solemn League and Covenant. Charles was abroad at that time, and so was Montrose, from whose help he had hopes. These hopes were soon ended; for Montrose, having raised a few hundred exiles in Germany, and landed with them in Scotland, found that the people there, instead of joining him, deserted the country at his approach. He was taken prisoner and carried to Edinburgh. He was sentenced by the Parliament to be hanged on a gallows thirty feet high, to have his head set on a spike in Edinburgh, and his limbs distributed in other places, according to the old, barbarous manner. He went to the scaffold at thirty-eight years of age. The breath was scarcely out of his body when Charles denied that he had ever given him orders to rise in his behalf. O, the family failing was strong in that Charles then!

Oliver commanded the army in Ireland, where he took a terrible revenge for the rebellion, and made tremendous havoc, particularly in the siege of Drogheda, where no

quarter was given, and where he found at least a thousand of the inhabitants shut up together in the great church, every one of whom was killed by his soldiers, usually known as Oliver's Ironsides. There were numbers of friars and priests among them, and Oliver gruffly wrote home in his despatch that they were "knocked on the head," like the rest.

But Charles got over to Scotland, and the Parliament called Oliver home to knock the Scottish men on the head for setting up that prince. Oliver left his son-in-law, Ireton, in Ireland, and he imitated the example of his father-in-law with such good-will that he brought the country to subjection, and laid it at the feet of the Parliament. In the end, they passed an act for the settlement of Ireland, generally pardoning all the common people but exempting from this grace such of the wealthier sort as had been concerned in the rebellion or in any killing of Protestants, or who refused to lay down their arms. Great numbers of Irish left the country to serve under Catholic powers abroad, and a quantity of land was declared to have been forfeited by past offences and was given to people who had lent money to the Parliament early in the war. These were sweeping measures, but if Cromwell had had his own way fully he would have done more yet.

Scotland, where Charles had arrived, and where he was accepted as king, was next invaded by Cromwell. But he could not bring the Scots to battle. His troops were sick and lacked food, and he fell back on Dunbar. In front of him were the Scots, and in the back of him was the sea, and on his left the Scots had hold of the pass that led to England. Cromwell met them and said, "Now let God arise, and His foes shall be scattered." And scattered the Scots were, in utter rout. In the next year, while Cromwell was still in Scotland, Charles and his troops crossed the border, and though his hopes of a rising in their favor

were disappointed, they pushed as far as Worcester, where Cromwell came up to and whipped them. This was his last fight. The Earl of Derby and others suffered death. Charles got off. A large sum was offered for his capture. He went through great adventures, in which he placed himself in the hands of more than forty persons, none of whom failed in faith or care. He was hunted all over the land by the troops for the reward of a thousand pounds. After many perils he crossed in a small boat and landed in Normandy. General Monk kept up the war in Scotland, and forced them to bow to the English Parliament.

Strife now rose up with the Dutch. This war is famed for the great sea-fight between Blake and Tromp. Once Blake was worsted, and Tromp sailed up the Channel with a broom at the top of his masthead, to mean that he had swept the seas clear of the English. In the next sea-fight Tromp fell. Peace was made with the Dutch the next year.

Now came back the old trouble between the troops and the Parliament—the "Rump," as the remnant of the House of Commons came to be called in scorn. There was a great war of words between the head men of both sides, when Cromwell with his troops closed the House and locked its doors. Cromwell was now the sole head of the whole of England, the one check on him being the troops. These troops prayed and preached together, and lived, as was said, "like a band of monks." Proud as these men were of Cromwell, they would ill have borne that he should take on him the name, hated by most of them, of king. A new Council of State was held, and Cromwell, who acted with the advice of his officers, called a hundred and forty men by name, to serve in this Assembly, known as "the Little Parliament," or as the Cavaliers nicknamed it, "Praise-God-Barebones-Parliament," from the quaint name of one of its members. Five months later they gave up all power to Cromwell, who was made by his officers

Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland (December 16, 1653). There was to be

THE BREAKING UP OF PARLIAMENT.

an elected Parliament of but one House; all who had aided the king were barred out.

With few friends but the troops, Oliver—for king-like he styled himself by his Christian name—had for foes all the king's friends, and the Republicans who considered that he had put an end to the Commonwealth. Plots of both sides were crushed, but the Cavaliers were put to death or sold for slaves in the West Indies. Plots were made to kill the Protector, but his rule was too strong and vigilant to be shaken off. His first Parliament questioned his authority, and were packed off by him in rage. The next met and voted that he should take the title of king; but there were many in the army who objected to this, and he thought it best to refuse. Most of all the old forms came back with new names. Once more there were to be two Houses of Parliament. The "other house," as the Commons called it, was to be a House of Lords, but it did not work well. A few of the old nobles were called in, but they held off. Cromwell's two sons were made lords, as well as others of the Parliament's friends. The Commons raised so much trouble in granting these titles of lords that Cromwell ended the Parliament, saying, "Let God judge between you and me." It was a fatal error, but for the moment all went well.

In the midst of his triumph Cromwell's heart was in fact heavy with the sense of failure. He had no desire to play the tyrant, nor had he any belief in the permanence of a mere tyranny. He was planning to call another Parliament, but before he could conclude what to do he felt his overtaxed strength giving way. He was at the height of his power. He seemed to have placed his government on a legal and national basis. Never had the fame of an English ruler stood higher; but in the midst of his glory the hand of death was falling on the Protector. Vigorous and full of energy as his life seemed, his health was not as strong as his will. He saw too clearly the chaos into which his death would plunge England, to be willing to die. Said he, "I would be willing to live to be of further

13 MONK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE. (193)

service to God and His people, but my work is done!" He died on September 3, 1658. So strong a hold had he over the minds of men that his son Richard was peaceably accepted as the new Protector, much to the wonder of the excited Royalists.

Richard was a weak and worthless man, but the bulk of the nation was content to be ruled by one who was at any rate no soldier, no Puritan, and no innovator. He was known to be lax and worldly in his conduct, and was believed to be conservative and even royalist in heart. His council called for a new Parliament on the old system of election. The army demanded the appointment of a soldier as its general in the place of the new Protector, who had assumed the command. They resolved to set aside Richard, whose weakness was now evident. The house was soon at strife with the soldiers, and the people grew tired of military rule. Monk, the commander of the Scottish army, threatened to march on London. His attitude aroused England to action. He entered London unopposed, and from the moment of his entry the restoration of the Stuarts became inevitable. It was found that Monk had been in treaty with the exiled court. Charles's promise of a general pardon, religious toleration, and satisfaction to the army, was received with a burst of national enthusiasm, and the old Constitution was restored by a solemn vote of the Convention, "that according to the ancient and fundamental laws of this kingdom the government is and ought to be by King, Lords, and Commons." The king was invited to hasten to his realm. He landed at Dover, and made his way, amidst the shouts of a great multitude, to Whitehall. "It is my own fault," laughed the new king, with irony, "that I had not come back sooner, for I find nobody who does not tell me he has always longed for my return."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHARLES II.

THERE never were such profligate times in England as under Charles II. Whenever you see his portrait, with his swarthy, ill-looking face and great nose, you may fancy him in his court, surrounded by some of the very worst vagabonds in the kingdom (though they were lords and ladies), drinking, gambling, indulging in vicious conversation, and committing every kind of profligate excess. It has been a fashion to call Charles II. "The Merry Monarch." Let me try to give you a general idea of some of the merry things that were done in the merry days when this merry gentleman sat upon his merry throne, in merry England.

The first merry proceeding was, of course, to declare that he was one of the greatest, the wisest, and the noblest kings that ever shone, like the blessed sun itself, on this benighted earth. The next merry and pleasant piece of business was for the Parliament to give him twelve hundred thousand pounds a year, and to settle upon him for life that old, disputed tonnage and poundage which had been so bravely fought for. Then General Monk, being made Earl of Albemarle, and a few royalists similarly rewarded, the law went to work to see what was to be done to those persons (they were called regicides) who had been concerned in making a martyr of the late king. Ten of these were merrily executed; that is to say, six of the judges, one of the council, two officers who commanded the guards, and a preacher who had preached against the martyr with all his heart. These executions were so ex-

tremely merry that every horrible circumstance which Cromwell had abandoned was revived with appalling cruelty. The hearts of the sufferers were torn out of their living bodies; their bowels were burned before their faces; the executioner cut jokes to the next victim as he rubbed his filthy hands together, that were reeking with the blood of the last, and the heads of the dead were drawn on sledges with the living to the place of suffering. Still, even so merry a monarch could not force one of these dying men to say that he was sorry for what he had done. Nay, the most memorable thing said among them was, that if the thing were to do again they would do it.

Sir Harry Vane, who had furnished the evidence against Strafford and was one of the most stanch of the Republicans, was also tried, found guilty, and ordered for execution. When he came upon the scaffold on Tower Hill, after conducting his own defence with great power, his notes of what he had meant to say to the people were torn away from him, and the drums and trumpets were ordered to sound lustily and drown his voice, for the people had been so much impressed by what the regicides had calmly said with their last breath that it was the custom now to have the drums and trumpets always under the scaffold, ready to strike up. Vane said no more than this: "It is a bad cause which cannot bear the words of a dying man," and bravely died.

These merry scenes were succeeded by another perhaps even merrier. On the anniversary of the late king's death the bodies of Oliver Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw were torn out of their graves in Westminster Abbey, dragged to Tyburn, hanged there on a gallows all day long, and then beheaded. Imagine the head of Oliver Cromwell set upon a pole to be stared at by a brutal crowd, not one of whom would have dared to look the living Oliver in the face for half a moment! Think, after you have read this reign, what England was under Oliver Cromwell, who was torn

CHARLES II.

out of his grave, and what it was under this merry monarch, who sold it, like a merry Judas, over and over again.

Of course the remains of Oliver's wife and daughter were not to be spared either, though they had been excellent women. The base clergy gave up their bodies, which had been buried in the Abbey, and they were thrown into a pit, together with the mouldering bones of Pym and of the brave and bold Admiral Blake.

The clergy acted this disgraceful part because they hoped to get the dissenters thoroughly put down in this reign, and to have but one prayer-book and one service for all kinds of people, no matter what their private opinions were. This was pretty well for a Protestant Church, which had displaced the Romish Church because people had a right to their own opinions in religious matters. However, they carried it with a high hand, and a prayer-book was agreed upon in which the extremest opinions of Archbishop Laud were not forgotten. An act was passed, too, preventing any dissenter from holding any office under any corporation. So the regular clergy, in their triumph, were soon as merry as the king. The army being by this time disbanded and the king crowned, everything was to go on easily for evermore.

Charles had not been long upon the throne when his brother and his sister died of small-pox. His remaining sister, the Princess Henrietta, married the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Louis XIV., King of France. His brother James, Duke of York, was made high admiral, and by and by became a Catholic. He was a gloomy, sullen, bilious sort of man, with a remarkable partiality for the ugliest women in the country. He married, under very discreditable circumstances, Anne Hyde, the daughter of Lord Clarendon, then the king's principal minister, who did much of the dirty work of a very dirty palace. It became important that the king should be married, and divers monarchs proposed their daughters to him. The

King of Portugal offered his daughter, Catherine of Braganza, and fifty thousand pounds; in addition to which the French king, who was favorable to that match, offered a loan of another fifty thousand. The King of Spain, on

HENRIETTA, DAUGHTER OF CHARLES I.

the other hand, offered any one out of a dozen of princesses and other hopes of gain. But the ready money carried the day, and Catherine came over in state to her merry marriage.

The whole court was a great flaunting crowd of debauched men and shameless women, and Catharine's merry husband insulted and outraged her in every possi-

ble way until she consented to receive those worthless creatures as her very good friends and to degrade herself by their companionship. A Mrs. Palmer, whom the king made Lady Castlemaine, and afterwards Duchess of Cleveland, was one of the most powerful of the bad women about the court, and had great influence with the king nearly all through his reign. Another merry lady, named Moll Davies, a dancer at the theatre, was afterwards her rival. So was Nell Gwynn, first an orange-girl and then an actress, who really had good in her, and of whom one of the worst things is that actually she did seem to have been fond of the king. The first Duke of St. Albans was this orange-girl's child. In like manner the son of a merry waiting-lady, whom the king created Duchess of Portsmouth, became the Duke of Richmond. Upon the whole, it is not so bad a thing to be a commoner.

The Merry Monarch was so exceedingly merry, among these merry ladies and some equally merry (and equally infamous) lords and gentlemen, that he soon got through his money, and then, by way of raising more, made a merry bargain. He sold Dunkirk to the French king for five millions of livres. When I think of the dignity to which Oliver Cromwell raised England in the eyes of foreign powers, and when I think of the manner in which he gained for England this very Dunkirk, I am much inclined to consider that if the Merry Merry Monarch had been made to follow his father for this action, he would have received his just deserts.

In the new Parliament the cavaliers held many votes. They passed a law and made all swear that it was in all cases against the good of the realm to take up arms against the king. The bishops had got back to their sees and were now back in their seats in the House of Lords. Charles held out hopes of changes to be made in the church laws that would please the new Presbyterians, but the Parliament would make more.

CHILDREN OF CHARLES I.

In place of making it easy they passed a harsh law, which made all who held church offices declare their assent to everything in the Book of Common Prayer. This drove out thousands from their churches, as the royalists had been turned out before. Harsh acts were passed to force the Nonconformists, as they were called, to come in. With Charles I. they tried to fashion the church to suit their views. With Charles II. they made up their minds to stand outside, and asked but for leave to "dissent" from the church.

Charles, for the sake of his Roman Catholic friends, did not want to be hard on dissent, but his motive was suspected. He put out a law that Protestant dissenters should be left to meet in places licensed for the purpose, and Catholics could worship in private houses. This Parliament would not grant.

They held out and he was forced to assent to a Test Act, which, though it shut out the Nonconformists from place, was aimed at the Catholics. With this act, all who held place in the church or troops had to take oaths of supremacy and allegiance, and to communicate according to the Anglican rites. Rather than do this, the king's brother, James, the Duke of York, gave up his place, by which act he showed himself to be, as he was long thought to be, a Roman Catholic.

In most parts of the land the king's rule was bowed to. Scotland once more became a separate realm. In Ireland they had to settle the old strife between the Cromwellians and the native race, and the Cromwellians were forced to give up one-third of their gains; but lots of them who swore they had no share in the Rebellion were left unhelped, and this tended to keep alive the old strife.

In 1665, in a hot and dry summer, broke out the great plague, with a fury such as had not been known for three hundred years. The court and most of the rich fled. Monk was the only man that stayed. The troops were

shut up, and grass grew in the streets; rows of houses stood empty, or marked on the doors with a red cross and the words "Lord have mercy on us!" which meant those within were struck down with the plague. By winter the worst was over, but in the six months that had passed it was said more than a hundred thousand died.

THE GREAT LONDON FIRE.

The plague had just passed, when out burst a great fire in London—a blaze that made the night as day for ten miles around. The king and Duke of York worked hard; they had the houses pulled down; some they blew up with powder. At last, when wide gaps were made in the streets, the wind ceased and the fire was stopped, but not till it had burned for three days and laid London in ashes

from the Tower to the Temple. The pillar known as the "Monument" marks the spot where the fire first started. Old St. Paul's was one of the buildings that perished. It was replaced by the present great church.

These bad years were followed by wars on the seas with the Dutch. One fight lasted for four days. In 1667, a Dutch fleet sailed up the Medway, burned the English ships, and blocked up the Thames. A queer thing in this fight was that English sailors served on the Dutch ships. This was because they had not been paid. Peace was soon made.

Parliament wanted to know how the funds voted for the war had been spent. Charles was forced to throw over Clarendon, his chief man, who fled and died in exile. The king's advisers now formed the Triple Alliance—England, Holland and Sweden—to check Louis XIV. But Charles secretly sold himself to Louis. He agreed to declare that he was a Roman Catholic as soon as he thought it was safe to do so, and to join in the war against Holland. He was to be paid large sums by Louis, and be helped if any row broke out in England.

The war with Holland broke out in 1672, and was ended in 1674. In 1678 the land was made wild by a "Popish Plot" to kill the King and all the Protestants. Titus Oates, a man of bad repute, was the witness, and for pelf he swore away the lives of many innocent Catholics. Now was passed an Act to shut out all Catholics but the Duke of York from the King's presence. They had long been held out of Parliament by the Test Act, but now the Catholic Peers ceased to take their seats. Both the Lords and the Commons were now made to take the oath, and to declare against the worship of the Church of Rome.

The Parliament, having lasted for eight years, was at last dissolved. The one that came next lasted less than a year, but to it we owe the famous Habeas Corpus Act. This was to force the Government to bring a man who had

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been long in prison to trial at court, and show why he was kept confined. In times of great public fear this act is sometimes suspended.

The names Whigs and Tories now rose up. The Whigs were those bent on keeping the Duke of York from the throne, on account of his faith. The Tories were against this scheme. Their name came from the Catholic outlaws who haunted the bogs of Ireland.

The king had no legal heirs. The eldest of his sons was James, Duke of Monmouth, the "Protestant Duke," as he was called by the common folks, who loved him for his easy grace and winning manners. In three Parliaments the Whigs pursued their scheme for an "Exclusion Bill" against the Duke of York.

The king grew vexed, threw out the Parliament, and for four years got on without one. Louis XIV. kept him in funds to carry on the court and State. The king resolved to take their charters from the strongholds of the Whigs, and London was placed under the king's rule, and could have no mayor or other officer without the king's assent.

This brought out more plots. Those who took part in them were betrayed, and Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney were hurried to the block. Monmouth fled. The Duke of York again took up his office, the king putting aside the Test Act. While wondering what to do next, Charles was seized with a fit, and died February 6, 1683. The Bishops pressed him in vain to take the Sacraments. James brought in a monk, from whose hands he received the last rites of the Church of Rome.

The people mourned him with real sorrow, for with all his faults he never lost their good-will, and they dreaded James when he came to rule.

On Monday, February 2, 1685, the merry pensioner and servant of the King of France fell down in a fit of apoplexy. By Wednesday his case was hopeless, and he was told so. As he made a difficulty about taking the

sacrament from the Protestant Bishop of Bath, the Duke of York got all who were present away from the bed, and asked his brother, in a whisper, if he should send for a Catholic priest? The king replied, "For God's sake, brother, do!" The duke smuggled in, up the back stairs, disguised in a wig and gown, a priest who had saved the king's life after the battle of Worcester—telling him that this worthy man in the wig had once saved his body and was now come to save his soul.

The Merry Monarch lived through that night and died before noon on the next day (Friday). Two of the last things he said were of a human sort, and your remembrance will give him the full benefit of them. When the queen sent to say she was too unwell to attend him and to ask his pardon, he said, "Alas, poor woman, *she* beg *my* pardon! I beg hers with all my heart. Take back that answer to her." And he also said, in reference to Nell Gwynn, "Do not let poor Nelly starve."

He died in the fifty-fifth year of his age and in the twenty-fifth of his reign.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

JAMES II.

King James II. was a man so very disagreeable that by comparison his brother Charles was quite a pleasant character. The one object of his short reign was to re-establish the Catholic religion, and this he doggedly pursued with such a stupid obstinacy that his career very soon came to a close.

He assured his council that he would make it his endeavor to preserve the government, both in the Church

and State, as it was by law established, and that he would defend and support the Church. Great public acclamations were raised over this fair speech, and a great deal was said from the pulpits and elsewhere about the word of a king which was never broken. With tears of joy in his eyes he received, as the beginning of *his* pension from the King of France, five hundred thousand livres; yet, with a mixture of meanness and arrogance that belonged to his contemptible character, he was always jealous of making some show of being independent of the King of France while he pocketed his money. Notwithstanding his open display of himself attending mass, the Parliament was very obsequious, and granted him a large sum of money, and he began his reign with a belief that he could do what he pleased and with a determination to do it.

Before we proceed to its principal events let us dispose of Titus Oates. He was tried for perjury a fortnight after the coronation and was sentenced to stand twice in the pillory, to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate one day, and from Newgate to Tyburn two days afterwards, and to stand in the pillory five times a year as long as he lived. This fearful sentence was actually inflicted on the rascal. Being unable to stand after his first flogging, he was dragged on a sledge from Newgate to Tyburn and flogged as he was drawn along. He was so strong a villain that he did not die under the torture, but lived to be afterwards pardoned and rewarded, though not to be ever believed in any more.

As soon as James was on the throne, Argyle and Monmouth went from Brussels to Rotterdam and attended a meeting of Scottish exiles to concert measures for a rising in England. Argyle was to land in Scotland and Monmouth in England.

Argyle was the first to act; but two of his men being taken prisoners, the government became aware of his in-

JAMES II.

tention, and was able to act against him with such vigor as to prevent his raising more than two or three thousand Highlanders, although he sent a fiery cross from clan to clan and from glen to glen, as the custom then was when those wild people were to be excited by their chiefs. As he was moving towards Glasgow with his small force he was betrayed by some of his followers, taken, and carried, with his hands tied behind his back, to his old prison in Edinburgh Castle. James ordered him to be executed on his old, shamefully unjust sentence within three days; he was beheaded, and his head was set upon the top of Edinburgh jail.

Monmouth, partly through being detained and partly through idling his time away, was five or six weeks behind his friend when he landed in Dorset. He set up his standard in the market-place, and proclaimed the king a tyrant and a popish usurper, charging him not only with what he had done, which was bad enough, but with what neither he nor anybody else had done, such as setting fire to London and poisoning the late king. Raising some four thousand men by these means, he marched on to Taunton, where there were many Protestant dissenters who were strongly opposed to the Catholics. Here both the rich and the poor turned out to receive him, and every compliment and honor that could be devised was showered upon him.

Encouraged by this homage he proclaimed himself king, and went on to Bridgewater. But here the government troops, under the Earl of Feversham, were close at hand, and he was so dispirited at finding that he made but few powerful friends after all, that it was a question whether he should disband his army and endeavor to escape. It was resolved to make a night attack on the king's army as it lay encamped on the edge of a morass called Sedgemoor. The horsemen were commanded by Lord Grey, who was not a brave man. He gave up the battle

almost at the first obstacle, and although the poor countrymen who had turned out for Monmouth fought bravely with scythes, poles, pitchforks, and such weapons as they

JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH.

had, they were soon dispersed by the trained soldiers and fled in all directions. When Monmouth himself fled was not known in the confusion, but Grey was taken early next day, and then another of the party was taken, who confessed that he had parted from the duke only four

hours before. Strict search being made, he was found disguised as a peasant, hidden in a ditch under fern and nettles, with a few peas in his pocket which he had gathered in the fields to eat. He was completely broken. He wrote a miserable letter to the king, beseeching and entreating to be allowed to see him. When he was taken to London and conveyed bound into the king's presence, he crawled to him on his knees and made a most degrading exhibition. As James never forgave or relented towards anybody, he told the suppliant to prepare for death.

This unfortunate favorite of the people was taken out to die on Tower Hill. The crowd was immense, and the tops of all the houses were covered with gazers. Before laying his head upon the block he felt the edge of the axe, and told the executioner that he feared it was not sharp enough and that the axe was not heavy enough. On the executioner replying that it was of the proper kind the duke said, "I pray you have a care, and do not use me so awkwardly as you used my Lord Russell." The executioner, made nervous by this, and trembling, struck once, and merely gashed him in the neck. Upon this the Duke of Monmouth raised his head and looked the man reproachfully in the face. Then he struck twice, and then thrice, and then threw down the axe and cried out in a voice of horror that he could not finish that work. The sheriffs, however, threatening him with what should be done to himself if he did not, he took it up again and struck a fourth time and a fifth time. Then the wretched head at last fell off, and James, Duke of Monmouth, was dead, in the thirty-sixth year of his age. He was a showy, graceful man, with many popular qualities, and had found much favor in the open hearts of the English.

The atrocities committed by the government which followed this Monmouth rebellion form the blackest and most lamentable page in English history. The poor peasants, having been dispersed with great loss and their

leaders taken, one would think that the implacable king might have been satisfied. But no; he let loose upon them a Colonel Kirk, who had served against the Moors, and whose soldiers—called by the people Kirk's lambs, because they bore a lamb upon their flag, as the emblem of Christianity—were worthy of their leader. The atrocities committed by these demons in human shape are far too horrible to be related here. Besides most ruthlessly murdering and robbing them, and ruining them by making them buy their pardons at the price of all they possessed, it was one of Kirk's amusements, as he and his officers sat drinking after dinner, to have batches of prisoners hanged outside the windows for the company's diversion. The detestable king informed him that he was "very well satisfied with his proceedings." But the king's great delight was in the proceedings of Jeffreys, now a peer, who went down into the West, with four other judges, to try persons accused of having had any share in the rebellion. The king pleasantly called this "Jeffreys' campaign." The people down in that part of the country remember it to this day as the Bloody Assize.

It began at Winchester, where a poor, deaf old lady, the widow of one of the judges of Charles I., was charged with having given shelter to two fugitives from Sedgemoor. Three times the jury refused to find her guilty, until Jeffreys bullied and frightened them into that false verdict. When he had extorted it from them, he said, "Gentlemen, if I had been one of you, and she had been my own mother, I would have found her guilty," as I daresay he would. He sentenced her to be burned alive that very afternoon. The clergy of the cathedral interfered in her favor, and she was beheaded within a week. As a high mark of his approbation the king made Jeffreys Lord Chancellor. It is astonishing, when we read of the enormous injustice and barbarity of this beast, to know that no one struck him dead on the judgment-seat. It was

enough for any man or woman to be accused by an enemy before Jeffreys to be found guilty of high treason. One man who pleaded not guilty he ordered to be taken out of court upon the instant and hanged, and this so terrified the prisoners that they mostly pleaded guilty at once. At Dorchester alone, in the course of a few days, Jeffreys hanged eighty people, besides whipping, transporting, imprisoning and selling as slaves great numbers. He executed nearly three hundred in all.

These executions took place among the neighbors and friends of the sentenced in thirty-six towns and villages. The bodies were mangled, steeped in caldrons of boiling pitch and tar, and hung up by the roadsides, in the streets, over the very churches. The sight and smell of heads and limbs, the hissing and bubbling of the infernal caldrons, and the tears and terrors of the people were dreadful beyond all description. One rustic, who was forced to steep the remains in the black pot, was ever afterwards called "Tom Boilman." The hangman has ever since been called Jack Ketch, because a man of that name went hanging and hanging, all day long, in the train of Jeffreys. You will hear much of the horrors of the great French Revolution. Many and terrible they were, there is no doubt; but I know nothing worse done by the maddened people of France in that awful time than was done by the highest judge in England, with the express approval of the King of England, in the Bloody Assize.

Nor was even this all. Jeffreys was as fond of money for himself as of misery for others, and he sold pardons to fill his pockets. The king ordered a thousand prisoners to be given to certain of his favorites in order that they might bargain with them for their pardons. When Jeffreys had done his worst and came home again, he was complimented in the Royal Gazette, and when the king heard that through drunkenness and raging he was very ill, his odious majesty remarked that such another man

could not easily be found in England. Besides all this, a former sheriff of London, named Cornish, was hanged within sight of his own house, after an abominably-conducted trial, for having had a share in the Rye House plot, on evidence given by Rumsey which was directly opposed

In the Time of James II.

to the evidence he had given on the trial of Lord Russell. And on the very same day a worthy widow was burned alive at Tyburn for having sheltered a wretch who himself gave evidence against her. She settled the fuel about herself with her own hands, so that the flames should reach her quickly, and nobly said with her last breath that she had obeyed the sacred commands of God to give refuge to the outcast and not to betray the wanderer.

After all this hanging, beheading, burning, boiling, mutilating, exposing, robbing, transporting and selling into slavery of his unhappy subjects, the king not unnaturally thought that he could do whatever he would. So he went to work to change the religion of the country with all possible speed, and what he did was this.

He first tried to get rid of the Test Act—which prevented the Catholics from holding public employments—by his own power of dispensing with the penalties. He tried it in one case, and eleven of the twelve judges deciding in his favor, he exercised it in three others, being those of three dignitaries of University College, Oxford, who had become papists, and whom he kept in their places. He revived the hated Ecclesiastical Commission, to get rid of Compton, Bishop of London, who manfully opposed him. He solicited the pope to favor England with an ambassador, which the pope (who was a sensible man then) rather unwillingly did. He favored the establishment of convents in several parts of London. He was delighted to have the streets, and even the court itself, filled with monks and friars in the habits of their orders. He endeavored to make Catholics of the Protestants about him. He held private interviews, which he called "closetings," with those members of Parliament who held offices, to persuade them to consent to the design he had in view. When they did not consent, they were removed and their places given to Catholics. He displaced Protestant officers from the army and got Catholics into their places, too. He tried the same thing with the corporations, and also with the lord lieutenants of counties. To terrify the people into the endurance of all these measures, he kept an army of fifteen thousand men encamped on Hounslow Heath, where mass was openly performed in the general's tent, and where priests went among the soldiers persuading them to become Catholics. For circulating a paper among those men advising them to be true to their religion, a Protes-

tant clergyman was sentenced to stand three times in the pillory, and was actually whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. He dismissed his own brother-in-law from his council because he was a Protestant. He handed Ireland over to the Earl of Tyrconnel, a worthless, dissolute knave who played the same game there for his master, and who played the deeper game for himself of one day putting it under the protection of the French king. In going to these extremities, every man of sense and judgment among the Catholics, from the pope to a porter, knew that the king was a mere bigoted fool, who would undo himself and the cause he sought to advance; but he was deaf to all reason, and, happily for England ever afterwards, went tumbling off his throne in his own blind way.

A spirit began to arise in the country which the besotted plunderer little expected. He first found it out in the University of Cambridge. Having made a Catholic a dean at Oxford without any opposition, he tried to make a monk a master of arts at Cambridge, which attempt the University resisted, and defeated him. He then went back to his favorite Oxford. On the death of the President of Magdalen College he commanded that there should be elected to succeed him one Anthony Farmer, whose only recommendation was that he was of the king's religion. The University plucked up courage at last, and refused. The dull tyrant, upon this, punished twenty-five men by causing them to be expelled and declared incapable of holding any church preferment; then he proceeded to what he supposed to be his highest step, but to what was, in fact, his last plunge head-foremost in his tumble off his throne.

He had issued a declaration that there should be no religious tests or penal laws, in order to let in the Catholics more easily; but the Protestant dissenters, unmindful of themselves, had gallantly joined the regular church in opposing it tooth and nail. The king resolved to have

that read in the churches, and to order it to be circulated for that purpose by the bishops. The latter took counsel with the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was in disgrace, and they resolved that the declaration should not be read, and that they would petition the king against it. The archbishop himself wrote out the petition, and six bishops went into the king's bedchamber the same night to present it, to his infinite astonishment. The next Sunday was fixed for the reading, and it was only read by two hundred out of ten thousand clergymen. The king resolved to prosecute the bishops, and they were summoned before the Privy Council and committed to the Tower. As the six bishops were taken there the people fell upon their knees and wept for them, and prayed for them. When they got to the Tower, the officers and soldiers on guard besought them for their blessing. While they were confined there, the soldiers every day drank to their release with loud shouts. When they were brought up for trial, which the attorney-general said was for the high offence of censuring the government and giving their opinion about affairs of state, they were attended by similar multitudes, and surrounded by a throng of noblemen and gentlemen. When the jury were out to consider their verdict, everybody knew that they would rather starve than yield to the king's brewer, who was one of them, and wanted a verdict for his customer. When they came into court the next morning, and gave a verdict of not guilty, such a shout rose up in Westminster Hall as it had never heard before; and it was passed on among the people away to Temple Bar, and away again to the Tower. It also reached the camp at Hounslow, where the fifteen thousand soldiers took it up and echoed it. And when the dull king heard the mighty roar, asked in alarm what it was, and was told that it was "nothing but the acquittal of the bishops," he said, in his dogged way, "Call you that nothing? It is so much the worse for them."

WILLIAM III., PRINCE OF ORANGE.

Between the petition and the trial the queen had given birth to a son. The entirely new prospect of a Catholic successor (for both the king's daughters were Protestants) determined a number of the nobles and the Bishop of London to invite the Prince of Orange over to England. The Royal Mole, seeing his danger at last, made, in his fright, many great concessions, besides raising an army of forty thousand men; but the Prince of Orange was not the man for James II. to cope with. His preparations were extraordinarily vigorous, and his mind was resolved.

For a fortnight after the prince was ready to sail for England, a great wind prevented the departure of his fleet. Even when the wind lulled, and it did sail, it was dispersed by a storm, and was obliged to put back to refit. At last, on November 1, 1688, the Protestant east-wind, as it was long called, began to blow, and on the 3d the people of Dover and the people of Calais saw a fleet twenty miles long sailing gallantly by, between the two places. On the 5th it anchored at Torbay, in Devonshire, and the prince with a splendid retinue of officers and men marched into Exeter. But the people in that western part of the country had suffered so much in the Bloody Assize that they had lost heart. Few people joined him, and he began to think of returning and publishing the invitation he had received from those lords as his justification for having come at all. At this crisis some of the gentry joined him; the royal army began to falter; an engagement was signed, by which all who set their hands to it declared that they would support one another in defence of the laws and liberties of the three kingdoms, of the Protestant religion, and of the Prince of Orange. From that time the cause received no check; the greatest towns in England one after another declared for the prince, and he knew that it was all safe with him when the University of Oxford offered to melt down its plate if he wanted any money.

The young prince was sent to Portsmouth, and there

was a swift dispersal of all the priests and friars. One after another, the king's most important officers and friends deserted him and went over to the prince. In the night his daughter Anne fled from Whitehall Palace, and the Bishop of London, who had once been a soldier, rode before her with a drawn sword in his hand and pistols at his saddle. "God help me!" cried the miserable king; "my very children have forsaken me." In his wildness, after debating with such lords as were in London, whether he should or should not call a parliament, and after naming three of them to negotiate with the prince, he resolved to fly to France. He had the little Prince of Wales brought back from Portsmouth, and the child and the queen crossed the river to Lambeth in an open boat, on a miserable, wet night, and got safely away.

At one o'clock on the morning of December 11 the king who had received a letter from the Prince of Orange, stating his objects, got out of bed, told Lord Northumberland, who lay in his room, not to open the door until the usual hour in the morning, went down the back stairs, and crossed the river in a small boat, sinking the great seal of England by the way. Horses being provided, he rode to Feversham, where he embarked in a custom-house vessel. The master of this vessel, wanting more ballast, ran into the Isle of Sheppy to get it, where the fishermen and smugglers crowded about the boat and informed the king of their suspicions that he was a "hatchet-faced Jesuit." As they took his money, and would not let him go, he told them who he was, and that the Prince of Orange wanted to take his life; and he began to scream for a boat—and and then to cry, because he had lost a piece of wood on his ride which he called a fragment of our Saviour's cross. He put himself into the hands of the lord lieutenant of the county, and his detention was made known to the Prince of Orange at Windsor, who, only wanting to get rid of him, and not caring where he went so that he went

away, was very much disconcerted that they did not let him go. However, there was nothing for it but to have him brought back to Whitehall. And as soon as he got there, in his infatuation he heard a mass and set a Jesuit to say grace at his public dinner.

The people had been thrown into the strangest state of confusion by his flight, and had taken it into their heads that the Irish part of the army were going to murder the Protestants. Therefore they set the bells a-ringing, and lighted watch-fires, and burned Catholic chapels, and looked about for the Jesuits, while the pope's ambassador was running away in the dress of a footman. They found no Jesuits, but a man who had once been a witness before Jeffreys in court saw a swollen, drunken face looking through a window down at Wapping, which he well remembered. The face was in a sailor's dress, but he knew it to be the face of that accursed judge, and he seized him. The people, to their lasting honor, did not tear him to pieces. After knocking him about a little they took him, in the basest agonies of terror, to the lord mayor, who sent him, at his own shrieking petition, to the Tower for safety. There he died.

Their bewilderment continuing, the people now made rejoicings, as if they had any reason to be glad to have the king back again. But his stay was short, and he was told that the prince would enter London next day, and he had better go to Ham. He said Ham was a cold, damp place, and he would rather go to Rochester. He thought himself very cunning in this, as he meant to escape from Rochester to France. The Prince of Orange and his friends knew that perfectly well, and desired nothing more. So he went to Gravesend, attended by certain lords and watched by Dutch troops, and pitied by the generous people, who were far more forgiving than he had ever been, when they saw him in his humiliation. On the night of December 23, not even then understanding

that everybody wanted to get rid of him, he went out absurdly, through his Rochester garden, down to the Medway, and got away to France, where he rejoined the queen.

There had been a council of the lords and the authori-

GREETING WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

ties of London. When the prince came, on the day after the king's departure, he summoned the lords to meet him, and soon afterwards all those who had served in any of the parliaments of King Charles II. It was finally resolved by these authorities that the throne was vacant by the conduct of King James II., that it was inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a popish prince, that the Prince and

Princess of Orange should be king and queen during their lives and the life of the survivor of them, and that their children should succeed them, if they had any. That if they had none the Princess Anne and her children should

KING WILLIAM THROWN FROM HIS HORSE.

succeed; that if she had none the heirs of the Prince of Orange should succeed.

On January 13, 1689, the prince and princess, sitting on a throne in Whitehall, bound themselves to these conditions. The Protestant religion was established in England, and England's great and glorious revolution was complete.

QUEEN ANNE.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CONCLUSION.

I HAVE now arrived at the close of my little history. The events which succeeded the famous revolution of 1688 would neither be easily related nor easily understood in such a book as this.

William and Mary reigned together five years. After her death William occupied the throne alone for seven years longer. During his reign, on September 16, 1701, the poor weak creature who had once been James II. of England died in France. In the meantime he had done his utmost to cause William to be assassinated and to regain his lost dominions. James's son was declared by the French king the rightful King of England, and was called in England The Pretender. Some infatuated people in England, and particularly in Scotland, took up the Pretender's cause from time to time,—as if the country had not had Stuarts enough!—and many lives were sacrificed and much misery was occasioned. King William died on March 7, 1702, of the consequences of an accident caused by his horse stumbling with him. He was always a brave, patriotic prince, and a man of remarkable abilities. His manner was cold and he made but few friends, but he had truly loved his queen. When he was dead a lock of her hair in a ring was found tied with a black ribbon around his left arm.

He was succeeded by the Princess Anne, a popular queen, who reigned twelve years. In her reign the union between England and Scotland was effected, and the two countries were incorporated under the name of Great Britain. Then, from the year 1714 to the year 1830, reigned the four Georges.

It was in the reign of George II., 1745, that the Pretender did his last mischief and made his last appearance.

VICTORIA.

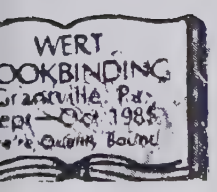
Being an old man by that time, he and the Jacobites—as his friends were called—put forward his son, Charles Edward, known as the Young Pretender. The Highlanders of Scotland, an extremely troublesome and wrong-headed race on the subject of the Stuarts, espoused his cause, and he joined them, and there was a Scottish rebellion to make him king, in which many gallant and devoted gentlemen lost their lives. It was a hard matter for Charles Edward to escape abroad again, with a high price on his head, but the Scottish people were extraordinarily faithful to him, and after undergoing many romantic adventures he escaped to France. A number of charming stories and delightful songs arose out of the Jacobite feelings and belong to the Jacobite times. Otherwise I think the Stuarts were a public nuisance altogether.

It was in the reign of George III. that England lost America by persisting in taxing her without her own consent. That immense country, made independent under Washington, and left to itself, became the United States, one of the greatest nations of the earth. In these times in which I write it is honorably remarkable for protecting its subjects, wherever they may travel, with a dignity and a determination which is a model for England. Between you and me England has rather lost ground in this respect since the days of Oliver Cromwell.

The union of Great Britain with Ireland—which had been getting on very ill by itself—took place in the reign of George III, in 1788.

William IV. succeeded George IV. in the year 1830, and reigned seven years. Queen Victoria, his niece, the only child of the Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III., came to the throne on June 20, 1837. She was married to Prince Albert of Saxe-Gotha on February 10, 1840. She is very good and much beloved. So I end, like the crier, with

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!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